Chain of Gold, a Western Maryland Novel

© 2008, 2020
Patrick H. Stakem

The author is from Cumberland, Maryland, is is familiar with Fort Cumberland, Fort Duquesne and Braddock's Defeat. This book is a work of fiction, based on actual events. Most of the Characters are historically correct, but I made up a few generic characters. A list is at the back of the book. There is also a list of some of the author's other books.

Near the Forks of the Ohio, disputed territory between New France and the British Empire in North America, July 10, 1755.

It was deathly quiet in the forest, as Private Jacob Smythe awoke with a start. The mist hung close to the ground, and the sun was not yet high enough to produce shadows. He shook his head, and tried to remember why he was there. The pain of his shattered ankle brought the events of the past day back in a flood of emotions. How had it gone so wrong? Why were so many dead, and why was he was still alive?

He became aware of an overwhelming thirst. His red jacket with the facing of the King's 44th Regiment of Foot was gone, as were his personal kit and his musket. He would have to pay for the lost equipment when he got back. If he got back. He fumbled around and found the stick he had used to limp into the deep brush to the side of the road the pioneers had built. There was a light glow in what he decided must be the eastern sky. He would have to be moving soon. That was going to be painful, but necessary.

The officers had told them after they left Fort Cumberland that the enemy would pose no obstacle for the British Army. They could expect to meet French militia, not regulars, and some Indians, not real troops. These would scatter at the first cannon shot and volley, and the Grenadiers would clear the way to the Fort. Why didn't it happen like the officers said? His ankle twinged again.

He remembered the initial contact with the enemy, after they had crossed the river. They were very near the French fort they had

been told told, and cavalry patrols were on the flanks. At the first round of musketry, the officers had the Grenadiers formed line, and the cannon were brought up. The pioneers and local scouts fell back. Sergeant Murphy formed his group into close order, made sure they were loaded, primed, and had bayonets fixed. Then they waited. Sergeant Murphy – there was a soldier's soldier, even if he were Irish. He had served under Braddock in Flanders, and knew how to steady a line. He was a mean SOB, but he knew his work. Jacob had seen him fall, his skull split by a savage's tomahawk. He was as much a father as Jacob had ever known. What Jacob knew about soldiering came from Murphy. Now Murphy was gone.

The battle had progressed initially as the officers said it would – the French would show some resistance to save face, and then retreat upriver. The British would move in to occupy the Fort. Some of the troops would garrison the position, while others would set off upstream to establish their dominance over the territory. Some troops would return to Fort Cumberland. But something happened that shouldn't have. The men in front came running back through the smoke of battle in a disorderly mob toward the ford across the Mongahala. They had no officers to rally them. Jacob had seen the militia officer from Virginia, George Washington, try to organize a rear guard and fight a delaying action at the ford.

A militia officer had them cross the stream in good order, and take up defensive positions on the other side. Some of the men had used up theie regulation 24 rounds, and had to scrounge for additional ammunition. Everything they had struggled to bring from England and across those accursed mountains was abandoned in the riot. All military cohesion was lost. He didn't know if he was supposed to take orders from a militia officer, but his survival instincts told him the man knew what he was doing. Men ran like packs of animals, and savages cut them down and butchered them as they lay wounded. Jacob had seen Braddock fall. He didn't know if he was alive or dead. He hadn't seen any other officers. He hadn't seen any French troops. This was not the way that wars were supposed to be fought. This wasn't what they were trained for.

Jacob remembered retreating past the scattered luggage, back down the wilderness road that had been cut so laboriously. He didn't see anyone he recognized – there were men of other ranks and lines, colonial militia, and the sailors, all thrown together. They had almost lost contact with the enemy, when Jacob had been shot. He remembered the blinding pain, and falling to the ground. He screamed for anyone to help him, to kill him but not leave him. A man he recognized as one of the wagon drivers got him off into the brush at the side of the road, and then left him. He laid still, deathly afraid. He knew he had voided his bowels into his pants. He didn't have a weapon. He knew he was going to die.

He prayed, then, as they had taught him at the orphanage he remembered as home. He wondered if any of his old mates were still alive. Tim, his bunkmate, who used to cry every night. He wondered if Pastor Burke was still there. He wondered when and how he was going to die. What would Sargeant Murphy do?

He heard the natives moving down the road as darkness fell. They were looting the bodies of the dead as they went. He could hear the screams as they dealt with the wounded. There were shouts, like orders being given, but he could not understand the words.

He closed his eyes and prayed. He did not want to die like that. He just wanted to get back to England. He would settle for getting back to that god-forsaken Fort Cumberland. The noise from the savages increased throughout the night, as they discovered the rum rations. Somehow, he fell asleep.

At first light, he stumbled out toward the road. There was no sign of any living person. The debris of a defeated army was strewn along the road. He uncovered a canteen, and emptied it. He moved slowly and cautiously along the brush at the side of the road, using a stick as a crutch.

He saw a horse grazing in a clear patch, and approached it cautiously. It was an officer's horse, and was still saddled. He

grasp the reins, and leaned against the horse. There was blood on the saddle. He checked the officer's kit, and found some cheese and biscuit, which he gulped down rapidly,

Jacob had never ridden a horse with a saddle before, but he was willing to try. He eased around to the horse's side, and put his good foot in the stirrup. He grasped the saddle horn, and swung himself. The horse, well trained, stood still, but the shock of pain that ran up Jacob's leg almost caused him to fall. He vomited his breakfast, and slumped over the horses neck. The waves of nausea abated, and he got the horse moving down the trail.

The way back to Fort Cumberland was obvious, he just had to follow the road. But, that's what the savages would be doing as well. He stayed off to the side of the road, picking his way through the forest, trying not to make too much noise,

Jacob came to a clearing he recognized as one of their encampments. Military equipment was scattered all over. He stopped near a broken wagon, managed to dismount, then tied the horse to the broken wheel. The debris had been well picked over, but he found some more water, a small bottle of brandy, and some dried food. The brandy rejuvenated him, and he was able to remount without passing out. He tied his small bag of supplies to the saddle and rode on. He could not find any weapons, but it looked like the powder kegs had been broken open, and the powder scattered over the ground. He knew the savages were still between him and the fort.

The journey outward from the fort at the Wills Creek had taken them more than a month. That was mostly because of the size of their supply train and the siege weapons they brought up the mountains by brute force. He would make better time on the way back, but he still had to pick his way carefully. The journey back east was a daze of pain and hunger. He found the other camps they had used on the journey outward. He never did see any other British troops, or any white men for that matter. Sometimes he

found parts of soldier's kit abandoned along the road, and he managed to get some more food. Quite a while later, he found a serviceable musket with powder and ball, and this made him feel better. Now the camps had less baggage to check through, but there was evidence of recent use. Shallow graves showed the toll that the men ahead of him had paid. He wondered if any other men of his line were still alive.

A light rain was falling from the overcast. Jacob recognized the Fort in the distance. Both he and the horse were too tired to hurry. He rode slowly up to the gate, and was challenged by the militia sentries in buckskin. “Private Smythe, of the 44th Line. Come from Fort Duquesne.”

The sentry's stood aside. “Welcome back. Not many of your mates made it.”

Jacob rode into the Fort, and was stunned by what he saw. The wounded lay everywhere, sometimes on blankets, sometimes just in the open. The smell stuck him hard. He rode the horse to a makeshift corral in the corner of the wall, and dismounted. A militia soldier, just a boy, came to help him. The other soldier removed the horse's saddle and bridle. The horse wandered off to the forage pile.

“Judgin' by the sores, he's not had that saddle off in a spell.”

“We rode day and night to get back from that hell,” Jacob replied. “Can you take me to the surgeon? I have a ball in my ankle.”

“There's quiet a few in front of you, mate, but I'll take you over there. Need any food?”

Jacob managed to smile, “I haven't eaten in a few days.”

“I'll bring you some grub, then, after we get you to the surgeon.”

The militiaman left Jacob outside the surgeon's tent after telling an orderly that he was there. Jacob lay back and closed his eyes. He did not want to loose his foot.

He watched the stretcher bearers constantly moving the dead outside of the fort to be buried. He thought he recognized an officer from his unit. “Ensign Douglas?” The boy turned. He was only 17, but his eyes made him look to be 60. His clothes were torn and dirty. “Private Symthe, Ensign. Sergeant Murphy's rank.”

The boy came over and sat next to Symthe. “They're all dead. I saw them die. I...they're all dead.”

“Are there no other lads from our line?”

“You're the first I have seen.” They boy lowered his head and began to sob.

The young, tall officer of Virginia militia came out of the tent and walked over to a group of men gathered around a fire.

“Any more men coming in?”

“One man, since yesterday. I reckon anyone able to get back already has. What's the butcher's bill, George?”

“Damned if I know. I tried to keep track of how many we buried along the road, and I know how many were buried here.” He scanned the interior of the wooden palisade fort. Almost all of the open space was covered by wounded. The officer looked up at the sky.”

“More than 400 killed, and at least that many wounded. We have almost no medical supplies, and only one surgeon, and he's asleep on his feet. I have sent a dispatch to Fredericktown for supplies and more wagons to transport the wounded.”

“Perhaps when Colonel Dunbar gets to Philadelphia....”

The officer's anger flared.

“Curse that man. He rode out of here like the devil was on his heels. These are his men. He doesn't even know the tally. Is this how the British Army treats their troops? This vaulted British Army was defeated in the wilderness by a pack of savages and French militia. Not the invincible World Power we were lead to believe. They leave us Colonials to clean up their mess...”

“What are you going to do, Colonel Washington?”

“I will do what can for these wounded men, get as many back as possible. Right now, I am going to pray for guidance from the Almighty.” He turned and walked out of the fort's western gate.

Later that day, Jacob was brought into the surgeons tent. The surgeon was barely awake. He wiped his bloody hands on a dirty rag, and examined Jacob's ankle. Jacob lay silently, praying. The surgeon said,

“Young man, you have survived thus far, and I think you will be all right. We can take the ball out, but I would suggest we leave it alone. It is not near anything vital. It will pain you some when it rains, but you'll get used to that. Next!”

A vast feeling of relief came over Jacob. He would keep his foot. he was still alive, and away from that awful place, away from the French and the savages. So many of his mates were dead, but he was still alive. He went in search of food.

Ensign Douglas found him in the compound a few days later. “They are preparing to send as many of the men back to Fredericktown as can safely travel. I am going with the wagoners. If you wish to come...”

“Nothing for me here, sir.” “Good man. You have a musket?”
“Yes, Sir.”

“Good. Draw powder and ball, and put what is yours on your horse. You can ride as guard with the militia.”

“Yes, sir...ah, sir, that's not really my horse. I found him on the road and...”

“ I know, Symthe. Under the circumstances, I think Barrington would let you keep it. He has no further need for it, you know.”

“Thank you, sir!”

The ensign wandered off, staring far away, and mumbling “They're all dead....”

Jacob got his horse saddled, and rode outside the fort where the wagon train was assembling. To the side, a makeshift graveyard with a crude wooden cross held many of the men he had once known and served with. As he watched, the militia officer Washington, marched a mixed troop of redcoats and militia in their blue jackets out to the burying place. He formed them into line, and had the men fire a volley over the graves. Then he saluted, and marched the men back into the fort. Jacob had a tear in his eye and he turned his horse to the east. It could have been him resting in the Earth there.

Cumberland, Allegany County, Maryland, October 1958.

“You ready for our walk, son?” The man asked.

“Yes, Pop.” It was getting on to 4 o'clock. It was a bright day, but the sun was getting close to the mountains in the west. More than a hint of Fall was in the air.

“You want to go to the train station again, son? Stop by the book store?”

“Can we go up where the old fort was, Pop?”

“Sure.” The man put on his tweed overcoat and hat, and made sure his son was buttoned up.

They rode down the elevator of the hotel to the lobby, and walked to the front door. The bellman hastened to open the door for the Manager. “Good afternoon, sir.” “Good afternoon, Harry. How's the wife?” “Much better, thank you, sir.”

Outside, the man and his son turned right, to head up Washington Street. The leaves on the trees were near their peak of color.

“This is the way I go to school, pop.” “Yes, I know, son.” The man smiled.”

The walked up along the steep path along the stone wall of the church grounds. Beyond the church was a Victorian mansion, now used as a house for the Pastor.

The ground leveled off at Prospect Square, with the Courthouse and the Library.

“Here where the church stands is part of where Fort Cumberland used to be.” said the man. “Is that one of the cannons?” said the boy. “No, son, that's from World War I”

“Did you study General Braddock in History?” said the man.

“I don't think so, pop. We studied George Washington last week.” “Ok, he's in this story too.”

They sat down on a bench. A panoramic vista of the city was before them. The man began to tell the story.

“Back before the Revolutionary War, there was a fort on this spot. This was where Wills Creek and the Potomac come together, you know.” The boy listened carefully.

“Interestingly, this was just a part of a seven year global war with most of Europe. It was even fought in India. In the end, England's superior Navy won the day. Strangely, we we fought for Independence from England in our Revoluntary war, France was on our side.”

“General Braddock led an army here to the Fort, and they headed west towards Pittsburgh to fight the French. They took their cannon and supplies and their payroll. There were several thousand Redcoats – British soldiers, and frontiersmen, led by George Washington. Near Fort Duquesne, up at Pittsburgh, the French and Indians attacked the British, and General Braddock and many of his soldiers were killed. George Washington took command, and got the men back to the fort. Most of their supplies and cannon were lost. Some say the army payroll in gold was hidden along the way.”

The boy was quiet for a while. “They never found the gold?” “No, it might still be out there. No one knows” “Can we find the gold, pop?”

“Maybe. A lot of people have spent a lot of time looking. Some say the Indians got it, some say the French, some say it is still buried up in Pennsylvania.”

“Let's head back and see what your Mother has for us for dinner, son.”

Monday dawned bright and clear, a perfect fall day. The boy's mother awakened him, and he put on the clothes she had laid out for him. As he always did, he noted the temperature and the weather in a notebook. He headed to the kitchen of their apartment

for breakfast, then they went down in the elevator to the lobby.

“You have all of your books and homework?” his mother asked. “Yes, Mom.” He replied, hefting his nearly new book bag. His father was at the main desk in the lobby.

“Have a good day at school, son” he said. The boy and his mother headed to the side door, and she saw him across the busy street. He hiked up the hill that he and his Father had been up yesterday, and went through the story his father told him, in his mind. He passed the library and the courthouse, stopping to collect some “buckeyes” or horse chestnuts and put them in his pocket. He liked their smooth feel. He proceeded on to school, and made his way inside to his classroom. He hung up his coat in the cloakroom, and went to his desk. They stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. The day's activities were outlined on the blackboard.

After recess came history. They had read about the French and Indian war, and the boy raised his hand.

When the teacher called on him, he asked about General Braddock. The teacher didn't know much about that, so she referred him to the library. At lunch, he hurried to the small school library, and asked the attendant for a book on Braddock. They looked at the several books they had on the Revolutionary War and the Indians, but nothing seemed applicable.

It was a long afternoon. Looking out the window the boy could see the blue skys and colored leaves of Autumn. After class was dismissed, the boy hurried into his coat and collected his books. He hurried down the street, not pausing to participate in the game of marbles that had sprang up on the recess grounds, or the baseball card trading that was going on. He went up the big steps of the library, between the big marble columns that made the building resemble a Greek temple. He had never been in there before. He went in the door, unsure of what to do next. The matronly librarian behind the big desk saw him, and asked if she could help him find

something.

“Yes, Ma'am.” he said. “I want to know about General Braddock and the French and Indians.” “You go over and sit at that table, young man, and I'll see what we have.” she fetched her glasses from the desk, and headed back into the shelves of books.

The boy sent over to the table, and put his book bag on it. He removed his hat and coat and sat down. After a while, he took out his math homework, and began to complete it. He didn't hear the librarian return.
“We don't have much, son, and I don't know if we have anything on your reading level. This book is by Mr. Lowdermilk, and has some material on General Braddock.” She put the big book down on the table.

“I can't let you check it out, but you can look through it here.”

“Thank you ma'am.”

“Just let me know if you need any more help” she said, returning to her desk.

The boy put his math work away in his book bag. He picked up the heavy book, which had that certain smell of old books. He opened it and read, “History of Cumberland, (Maryland) from the time of the Indian town, Caiuctucuc, in 1728, up to the present day: Embracing an account of Washington's first ... with a history of Braddock's expedition” by William Harrison Lowdermilk.”

He turned to the section on the French and Indian War, and got out a sheet of binder paper and a pencil and began to take notes.

Later, he put on his hat and coat, and returned the book to the lady at the desk.

“Did you find what you wanted, young Man?”

“Yes, Ma'am. For now. Thank you.”

He headed home, and his mother met him at the side door. “I was beginning to worry about you. Did you stop to trade baseball cards again?”

“No, Mom. I stopped at the library to read about General Braddock. Dad told me about him yesterday, during our walk.”

The boy's mother smiled, and they went up in the elevator. It was rockets and chemistry last week, and weather forecasting the week before that. He seemed to have such a wide range of interests.

Cumberland, Allegany County, Maryland, a quiet street on the West side, 1964.

The boy had made the bed, tidied up the apartment and was ready to go out. His father and mother had already left for work. His father car-pooled, and his mother took their only car. He was too young to drive anyway. The city had many places for him to explore. He had the old bicycle he had picked up and repaired in the workshop in the basement. He had put a few more parts on the airplane model he was working on, and set it aside to dry. Not much came in on his shortwave radio before night.

He fed the cats, made sure all the lights were off, and pulled the door of the apartment shut behind him He had a knapsack with a canteen of water, a sandwich, some books, and his camera. He set off for Will's Mountain. About a ten minute walk took him to the base of the steep road to the top. He hiked to the top, and went around the factory building there. Strange place for a factory, he always thought. He went through the woods towards the cliff face, passing the foundation and ruins of what his Dad had told him was the “Will's Mountain Inn” which had burned years before. He reached the cliff face, and set his knapsack down to enjoy the view of the City to his left, and the Narrows below his feet. He looked across at Haystack mountain, the other side of the Narrows. He was near the point called “Lover's Leap” where the local legend said a white man and his Indian sweetheart jumped to their deaths because they were not allowed to marry.

The boy knew the geography of the mountains. Over many years, Wills Creek had cut a 800 foot gash in the mountain range, and separated Will's from Haystack mountain by a mile-wide gap.

He took out his camera and took some pictures that he would develop that evening. The day was warm but not overly hot. He drank some water from his canteen and sat down on the rocks. He tried to imagine a British Army with cannon wending its way through the Narrows, or climbing Haystack Mountain on their way west. The previous weekend, he and his Mom and Dad had driven up to Fort Necessity, to see where Washington had fought the French. They drove a bit further, past the monument marking Braddock's grave, and he had taken lots of pictures.

He took out one of his books, and sat against a tree to read. When he saw the sun beginning to head down in the western sky, he checked his watch. Getting on to 4 o'clock. Time to be heading home. His parents would be getting home from work soon.

Plantation of Thomas, 6th Lord Fairfax of Cameron, Belvoir, Colony of Virginia, 1748.

The young man had the self-confidence of his 16 years of youth, and was more than curious about why he had been summoned to the manor house. He was shown into the library by a liveried servant, and the doors were closed. He took the opportunity to study the titles of the many books on diverse topics on the shelves. He had never seen so many books. He turned when the door opened, and put the book back.
“Good Morning, your Grace” he said.

“Young Washington. Glad to see you” Lord Fairfax was dressed in dusty riding clothes. He extended his hand to the young man. “Please be seated.” He indicated a chair by the fireplace.

A servant entered and poured them both a glass of wine. “To his Majesty” suggested Fairfax, raising his glass. “To his health and

yours, sir”

“We are actually related, young man, did you know, through the Yorkshire branch of my family. How is your mother faring?”

“Well, Sir. I inherited the estate Mt. Vernon when my brother Lawrence passed away.”

“Yes, a fine man, my condolences.” They drank another sip of wine.

“You have come to my attention as a capable young man. I need capable men, Master Washington.”

“Yes, Sir?”

“My land grant from the Crown has never been properly surveyed. We know little of the western lands. My lands extend from the Rappahannock River to the Potomack, and from the Ocean to the Ohio. That's over 5 million acres.”

Washington was impressed. “How may I be of service to you, Sir?”

“I am looking for a man, a capable man, to explore and survey the western part of my domain. The border of my lands with Lord Calvert is unclear, and the western extent is unknown. Would you be interested in such a job?”

“Why, yes sir, I would”

“Excellent. More wine?”

Later after Washington had left, Fairfax remarked to his servant, “That young man might just amount to something if he applies himself.”

Near the Western Border of Lord Fairfax's Lands, British Empire in North America, 1748.

Washington had finished his evening meal, and lay back against the tree to watch the sunset over the mountains to the west. This was his favorite place - the mountains of the west. The surveying was going along well. They did not encounter any French troops, or natives. Having completed his task, he reports back to Lord Fairfax, with detailed maps and descriptions. Fairfax is very pleased. In 1751, he sends Christopher Gist to blazes a path west into the wilderness for the Ohio Company. Gist builds a log fort and community in the wilderness. In 1752, Gist, Thomas Cresap, and Nemacolin (a Delaware) return, marking a path from Wills Creek to Great Crossing of the Yough.

Office of the Honorable Robert Dinwiddie, Esq. His Majesty's Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of Virginia, February 1753.

George Washington knocked on the door of the Governor's Office, and heard “Enter.”

“Your Grace”, he addressed the man at the desk, who rose to shake his hand.

“Greetings Mr. Washington. How is your family?”

“Well, your grace. Busy over the French problem in the Ohio Company.”

“Yes, we all are distracted by that. Along those lines, I have a favor to ask of you that could change our fortunes. I would like to appoint you as a Special Envoy to the French forces in Canada, to carry an ultimatum to them from our British friends.”

“I would be honored, Sir. I will carry out my duties as best I can.”

“Most Excellent. Also, along the way, see if you can make peace with the Iroquois Confederation, and bring them over to our side. Gather what intelligence you can about fortifications, troop strengths, and pathways.”

“Whom would you take with you?”

“Certainly Christopher Gist, who knows that territory. Also, a French interpreter.”

“A good plan. Carry it through, and we can start the colonization of the lands beyond the Ohio. I will provide you with written orders, a note on the treasury, and horses and supply's. When can you leave?”

“Within a few days Sir.”

“Good. Sooner the better. Best of luck to you, Mr. Washington.”

“Thank you, Sir.”

Fort Le Boeuf, south of Lake Erie, New France, 11 Dec 1753.

Washington, Gist, Jacob van Braam, the translator, and Seneca Iroquois Chief Half-King carry a message for the French from Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia to the commander at Fort Le Boeuf.

A series of Forts had been built by the French to link their presence in at Montreal in Canada to the Ohio Country in the United States, and also Louisiana. One could get from the The Saint Lawrence River at Quebec and Montreal to New Orleans almost entirely by water. About 15 miles of portage from Lake Erie was required, and the end of the Portage was guarded by Fort Le Boeuf. It was part of a chain of forts protecting the route including Fort Presque Isle,

Fort Machault, and Fort Duquesne.

Washington delivers Governor Dinwiddie's ultimatum to the elderly Capt. Commandant Le Gardeur de Saint-Pierre, Commandant of French forces on the Ohio. The Commandant pens a reply, which he gives to Washington to return to Dindiddie. He provided food and supplies for them as well. The Commandant forwards the ultimatum to Quebec. Washington has carefully documented the approaches to the fort, the number of troops, and the number and type of cannon.

He returns and reports to Dinwiddie. Later, Dinwiddie sends Militia Captain Trent to the Forks of the Ohio on another task to build Fort Prince George. Always name the fort after your boss.

Forks of the Ohio, Colony of Pennsylvania, April 16, 1754.

“Colonel, canoes approaching” The sentry had run from the north riverbank. “How many?”

“Twenty or more.”

“Have the men assemble with arms, but no one is to fire unless on my orders.” “Yes, sir.”

Trent put on his hat and coat, and buckled on his sword. He went down to the riverbank to await the canoes. They were full of armed men, as he had feared, French regular troops, militia, and Indians. His men were in line behind him, but it was obvious that they were greatly outnumbered. They could have opposed the landing, but he knew that would have been futile, because of the maneuverability of the canoes. They could land anywhere they wanted on the point of land at the confluence of two rivers. If only they had finished the fort.

Several canoes landed, while the rest stayed back out of musket range. They had spread out along the bank. From the lead canoe, a

French officer disembarked, straightened his uniform coat, and proceeded to the Virginian officer.

“Claude Pecaudy de Contrecoeur, Officer of New France, and representative of the Governor General of Quebec and his most August Majesty at Versailles. At your service sir.” He bowed, with a flourish. His English pronunciation was flawless.

Captain Trent of the Virginia Militia, representative of Governor Dinwiddie of the Virginia Colony.”

“Captain, you are trespassing on the Territory of New France. We have orders to construct a Fort at this point. I see you have started our work for us. For this, I am grateful.”

“We are under the orders of the Governor of Virginia to built a fort here, Sir.”

“This small piece of land is too small for two forts, sir. Regretfully, we must ask you to leave. There is no reason for a conflict here. I should point out we outnumber you, and many more of my men are en route.”

The Virginians pack their tools and begin their journey back to Fort Cumberland. The French complete the fort, and name it Fort Duquesne, after Marquis de Duquesne, Governor General of New France. Always name the Fort after your boss.

Great Meadow, disputed territory between New France and the British Empire in North America, April 5, 1754.

“Ok, boys, this is it.” Colonel Washington dismounted and walked behind a tree to relieve himself.

“We'll set up camp here, and begin work tomorrow. Governor Dinwiddie wants Fort Prince George finished as soon as possible.”

The horses were unsaddled and tethered. A fire was quickly built, and the smells of a meal began to diffuse through the forest. Water bags were filled from the river. Sentries were posted to watch the river approaches. As the sun went down, the sounds of the forest began, and a mist from the river made the setting sun into a red ball in the west.

The next day, the Virginia militia-men began to fell trees, and prepare them for a stockade fort. The pack horses were used to drag the felled logs to a cleared area. Other men began to dig holes for setting the stockade logs.

At a break, one of his officers asks Washington what he will name the Fort. “It's not much, but it will keep our supplies safe and dry. Fort Necessity, the name pretty wells sums it up,”

Washington had under his command 295 militia, and 100 British Regulars. John Fraser was second in command.

On July 3, they still did not have good information on the size of the French forces, or their disposition. Washington, in caution, surrenders to Coulon de Villiers.

Capt. Robert Stobo of the Virginia Regiment is left as a hostage, and taken to Fort Duquesne. He observes carefully, and draws a detailed plan of the fort He sneaks it out via a friendly Indian, and its delivered to Fort Cumberland.

Jumonville Glen, Far Western section of the Colony of Pennsylvania, May 28, 1754.

Directed by Virginia Lieutenant. Governor Robert Dinwiddie, George Washington, along with Half-King Tanacharison, lead a raiding party of 40 militia and native warriors against 29 French soldiers.

“What's the final tally, my friend?” asked Washington.

“We have this day killed 10 of the enemy, and hold nineteen hostages. It is a good day.”

“What will we do with these enemy?”

“Order the hostages to bury the dead. We will then release the hostages on parole.”

“We will not kill them? We never leave a live enemy behind us.”

“No. It is not our way.”

“You white men, both the French and the English, are very strange. Some day I hope to visit this England and France, just to see how strange they are.”

“I hope you get to do that, my friend.”

This is the critical point where the French & Indian War ignited.

Fort Saint George, later, Fort Duquesne, Forks of the Ohio, New France, 26-28 June, 1754.

A soldier knocked on the door of the commandant's cabin in the small fort, and entered.

“Canoes approaching, Sir.”

“Merci. I will be there shortly. Have the men turn out with arms.” Contrecour finished his journal entry, and closed the book on the table. He strapped on his sword, and straightened his uniform jacket, then went out to the river bank to meet the approaching convoy.

A canoe drew up on the shore, and a French officer disembarked. He saluted Contrecour.

“Captain Coulon de Villers, at your service, Sir. I am Jumonville's brother. I bring with me supplies and reinforcements for you.”

“Welcome, Captain. Your men and supplies are very much

welcome. Let us proceed to my cabin and you can give me the latest news from Quebec."

"I am at your service, Sir."

Fortress of Gibraltar, Mediterranean Sea, December, 1754

"Come" was the response to the knock on the Governor's office door. General Braddock, late of the Coldstream Guards, put down his reports, and examined the officer who entered. Braddock was the ideal of a British general officer, well-connected, having lead troops for the British Empire in battle. He was now the Major General commanding the 14th Regiment of Foot on the Rock. It was a quiet position, after his battle service in Flanders. He commanded a battalion of paper pushers, he thought.

"A message for you Sir, from London, arriving on the latest packet ship."

The officer handed the dispatch to the General, and stepped back, at attention."Thanks you Mr. Montressor."

Braddock broke the wax seal and untied the ribbon. Unfolding the message, he read it, and exhaled heavily.

"Good news, sir?"

"Only time will tell. The King has seen fit to assign me to the command of an Expedition to the colonys against the French and their Indian allies. Horse Guards sends my orders. I am to leave for London at my earliest convenience."

"The New World, Sir. A place to make fame and fortune."

"One would hope, Major. These fringes of the empire sometimes hold surprises."

"Yes, Sir. But I am sure the expedition plans have been well thought out before they were approved by the King."

"You would think that, Major. We shall see. I need to tell my wife.

Gather the Senior Officers in the mess room in an hour."

"Yes, Sir...Sir, will your staff be accompanying you?"

"I haven't thought that through, Major. If "the Rock" can spare you as Chief Engineer, I could use you on the Expedition."

"It would be an honor, Sir."

The General left the office for his quarters, and the Major helped himself to some of the General's Madeira. He was thinking of opportunities for new fortunes in the new world.

Port of Cork, Ireland, January 1755.

The regiments were drawn up on the quay with their regimental colors, about 750 men in each. Stewart's light horse stood by, and Coronel Ord's detached Royal artillery unit was parked nearby in line, with their heavy munitions wagons. He was overseeing the operation.

"As you pull up next to the ships, unhitch the horses and remove them. Secure the harnesses and tack."

"Yes, Sir."

The able seamen on the war ships and transports watched the proceedings with amusement.

"How long before they are heaving their breakfast over the rail, you think, Jack?"

"Shouldn't take long, Tommy. Not long at all. None of them soldier boys I have seen can stand the feel of a moving deck under their shoes for long."

The orderly regiments quickly descended into chaos as contradictory orders flew back and forth, the horses objected to being hoisted into the holds, and the heavy cannon and supplies

were loaded.

“We'll miss the next tide, for sure, and the Captain will be chewing nails” said an able seaman, repairing some rigging. It's already ankle deep in horse shit in the holds. A regular cock-up.”

“Typical, when we host the British Army, Mr. Parker.”

“Give me action against the Frenchies anyday, Sir.”

The troop transports were contract ships, hired by the Navy Board. Each could hold about 100 men. The ships included the *Anna, Halifax, Osgood, Industry, Isabel and Mary, Terrible, Fame, Concord, Prince Frederick, Fishburn, Molly,* and *Severn*. The *London* was the assigned transport for the Medical Officers, headed by James Napier. The Ordnance ships *Whiting, Newall, and Nelly* carried the Royal Artillery detachment, under Captain Ord with 60 men, 13 artillery wagons, 17 wagons for ammunition, six brass six-pounders, four brass twelve-pounders, four brass 8” howitzers, and 6 Coehorn mortars. A Medical stores ship, the *Neptune,* sailed separately. The expedition was escorted by the warships *Seahorse* and *Nightingale,* and followed three weeks after Braddock had set sail.

Port of Alexandria, His Majesty's Colony of Virginia, British North America, March 10, 1755.

Braddock and his staff went down to the waterfront to see the ships arrive. He had sailed from England just before Christmas, with 3 warships. He arranged for getting wagons and horses to transport his troops to the Fort.

The British ships crammed the harbor at Alexandria. Most of the townspeople had shown up early to see the troops disembark. They were not disappointed at the show. The troops were turned out in full uniform, and arranged into companies on the dock. Hakett's 44th Regiment of Foot, with their yellow facings on the jackets, formed up first and moved off into the town behind the regimental

standards, with their drummers. The 48th Regiment followed. Most of the townspeople lost interest and drifted off as the heavy work of unloading the siege cannons and the army's luggage began.

George Washington volunteered as Braddocks aide-de-camp. On his advise, They contacted Ben Franklin in Philadelphia for wagons, horses, and teamsters. Everything took a lot more time than it should.

The petty officer overseeing the work gang cursed again. “Bloody Hell. We need the carriages first, you idiots, then the cannon barrels. Otherwise, we have to lift everything twice.” The work gang, bare to the waist and sweating in the heat, stopped hoisting a cannon barrel. “Give me a lantern.”

Down in the hold, the petty officer found the carriages had been loaded first, then the barrels. “God's grace, doesn't any one bloody think? One has to load the burden in the opposite order that you want to unload it.”

“Them's that loaded it are back in England, begging your pardon, Sir”

“I know that, damn you! And you're here to unload it, so get to it. What a mess. The artillery boys want their toys. Should be six of the 6-pounders, 4 of the 12-pounders, and four howitzers. The wagons come next.”

“Quartermaster, did you check the cargo manifest and verify it?”

“Aye, Sir. Besides the cannon, 572 barrels of powder, 6450 cannon balls, signal rockets, 1,600 entrenching tools, 3 sets of armor, and the hospital supply's on a separate ship.

Back on deck, he addressed the sweating deck gang again.

“Listen up, men. Some of you will be going with the army to help

with rigging and rope work. When the army takes the fort from the French, you will be in charge of water transportation. Anyone have a keen interest in seeing the interior of this cursed land?"

Several men volunteered, and the rest were chosen.

"Work them hard, keep them busy, or they will get into mischief," the petty officer told his Army counterpart."

"You men of the Naval Group will be under this gentlemen's orders. Do as he says, try not to get your self killed."

"You wished to see me, Sir?" The aide had come to attention before Braddock's Field Desk.

"Yes. I need six men for special duties on the march. Choose them from the Grenadier Company. I will give them their orders personally."

"I will attend to that immediately, Sir." The aide saluted and turned to go.

"Major? No Irish."

"Yes, Sir."

The Major went off to find the Sargeant of the Grenadier company. He tells him to report to Braddock.

The tall Grenadier Sargeant knocked on Braddocks's tent pole.

"Enter."

"Sergeant Fraser at your command, Sir." The man snapped to attention. "At ease, Sergeant. Fraser, didn't you service under me on the Continent? "

“Aye, Sir, and it was a privilege, Sir.”

“Sargeant, I have need of a special detachment for a special mission. I think you and your boys would be the right ones.”

“At your orders, General.”

“All right, then.” We will proceed up into Canada after we finish off this business in the wilderness. We will be on our own for about a year. We'll probably head back to England from Quebec. That means we need to take the payroll with us, as well as other moneys to purchase supply's. We have around 1300 men, with some sailors accompanying us, and the artillery lads as well. I need a guard for that payroll to protect it from the French, Indians, our own troops, and the militia.”

“I'll get you a wagon and team, and the main trunk, as well as my personal funds and papers. You will guard this cargo with your lives. Your first responsibility is the gold.” I will inform the officers that you are doing a special mission for me. You will not mention what you are guarding.”

“Aye, General. Several of the lads and I can keep an eye on that for you.”
“Excellent. We are hiring drivers for the wagons and cannon carriages, but one of your men will drive the special wagon. It will be under your guard at all times.”

“Aye, Sir. How many men should I have with me?”

“Your choice, Sergeant”

“Aye, Sir. Thank you Sir”

“Stand by until the wagons show up. The cargo will stay on the ship for now.”

“Aye, Sir.”

“Dismissed.”

British North America, Alexandria, Colony of Virginia, March 1755, Carlyle House, Braddock's HQ.

“Gentlemen!” Braddock brought the senior staff meeting to order.

The noise level decreased abruptly, and heads turned toward the General. He spoke directly to the point.

“Gentlemen, we are about to embark on our great journey of conquest, for the further glory of King George, and for the Empire.”

“Our surveys have shown that there is no good water route to the Forks of the Ohio to transport our siege train and supplies. The rivers flow the wrong way, they tell me. Thus, we will build a road through the wilderness for our uses.”

“The French have the advantage. They can move troops and supplies quickly down the rivers from Quebec. There are no good maps available, but we have the services of some colonials with detailed knowledge of the territory we will cross. In particular, Colonel Washington of the Virginia militia will be attached to my staff.”

“Colonial troops have been dispatched to the Wills Creek to begin construction of a fort that will be our forward base in the expedition against the French. Colonial Militia will be used as rangers, carpenters, pioneers, scouts, light horse, and in a support role to our regulars, as well as for garrison duty. Our line troops are expected to do the fighting.”

“We will have to carry everything we need with us, as opposed to

your past experience in Europe. Foraging for food will not be possible once we leave the coastline. There are very few villages of any importance or size inland. We will rely on our scouts to select camps near sources of water."

"We will need a large number of horses and wagons for our supply train. I have a Mr. Benjamin Franklin of the Pennsylvania Colony working on this. As you may have observed, the horses here in the colonies are smaller than our English horses, and thus we will need more of them. Our standard transport wagons will be supplemented by those built in the colonies. I have arranged with Mr. Franklin to supply drivers as well."

"Once we take Fort Duquesne at the Forks of the Ohio, we will dispatch troops by water to other parts of the French Territory. Some of the Royal Navy will be accompanying us in a support role."

"Some of you have served with me before in Europe. This is a different land. However, you are the best Regiments for the job. You are chosen men. King George has put his trust in you, and in me, to secure our land for British Colonists."

"Gentlemen, it is time to send the French back to France."

A servant enters and tells Braddock there is a gentleman to see him. Braddock has him brought in.

"Young Washington, you got my letter, I see."

"Yes, Sir"

"Mr. Washington, I know Lord Fairfax holds you in high regard. I would like to ask for your assistance in the upcoming affair with the French."

"It would be an honor to serve, Sir."

“Excellent. As you are already an officer in the Militia, I am adding you to my Staff. You have been to the areas we have to pass through, so you will be of great assistance.”

Cheers erupted from the officers. Braddock turned and walked out, needing to deal with a myriad of trivial details before the siege column could get underway. He was beginning to miss his position at Gibraltar. What he did miss was Marie, the French maid, tidying up the room. She just faded into the background. After the men had left, she returned to her room, and wrote down everything she had heard. She headed into town to get grocery's, and to hand off an important letter.

British North America, April 14, 1755.

Colonel Dunbar's troops had set up camp at Owen's Tavern in Rockville. The next day, they got an early start, and made it the 15 miles to Dowden's Ordinary in Clarksville. It was snowing. The next day, continued on toward Frederick City, where they arrived on th 18th. Braddock followed in their footsteps.

The rest of the troops, along with George Washington, crossed the Potomac to the south side, and continued west on that route.

Port of Alexandria, His Majesty's Colony of Maryland, British North America, April 1755.

The maid entered the tavern at the arranged time. She spotted her contact at a table, and joined him. She put a parcel on the table. “Bon Jour, Marie.” “Bon Jour. Here are all the British plans to date. I have sketched some maps, but I didn't have time to copy the originals.” “Bien. I will leave tonight by sail for New France You have made a great contribution to our cause. Will you remain here?”

“I will in the short term, I don't want to leave too early, and I may

pick up some more news. I understand my fellow Acadians were forced out of Nova Scotia by the British, and some are now in Annapolis, so I may join then. Bon chance, then!"

The maid got up and left the tavern. The man finished his ale and left some coins on the table before he went out. All around the town, the red-coated troops were breaking camp, and collecting their equipment, A long string of wagons was being loaded with supplies.

The man rode leisurely out of town, following the river west.

He camped that night at the Big Falls of the Potomack River. The sound of the water soon brought him a deep sleep. Near dawn, he awoke with a start. He was not alone in the camp. An older, cloaked man sat on the other side of his campfire.

"Bon Jour, Pierre"

"Salutations. How go things with the British Army?" The cloaked man spoke English with a heavy French accent.

"I have come to tell you that, Mon ami. Let us get the fire going and have some small repast."

After a quick breakfast, the man presented his report.

"The British prepare to march. They have left in two groups, one on each side of the river. They have about 3,000 men, and artillery. Some of the sailors accompany them. The Virginia Militia goes along. They plan to combine their forces at the Fort at Wills Creek, before moving against Contrecoeur "

"He only has some 300 troops, and most of them are militia from Quebec. He has many Indians there, but who know if they will fight? What artillery does Braddock bring?"

"This General Braddock brings with him four 12-pounders, six 6-

pounders and some howitzers”

“These will cause great trouble for Contrecoeur, should Braddock manage to get them across the mountains.”

“That is so.”

“What of our men the British hold as prisoners?”

“They are treated well, sir, but desire to return to the service of New France and the King.”

“God grant that will be soon.”

“Here is a copy of the British Army's latest plans, troop strengths, cannon, and supplys.”

The cloaked man stood, and mounted his horse. “I must bring this news to Montreal. Contrecoeur will need time to decide how to face this threat. Your service to New France is greatly acknowledged, Mon ami.”

“Your servant, sir. Bonne journée”

As the older man rode north, the other man mounted his horse and returned to Georgetown.

April 20, 1755, Colony of William Penn.

“Ben – what's this advertisement in the paper mean?” The gentleman had entered the inn, and seen Franklin at his supper.

“It means what it says, Isaiah. I met with the British General Braddock at Fredericktown in Maryland, and his expedition against the French is at an end unless he gets 150 wagons and teams to haul his supplies.”

“Is this a good deal, Ben?”

“It is, Isaah. The per diem for the wagons and teams is fair. They will only be involved in hauling his supplies to the Wills Creek, no farther. You get to choose the value of the wagon and team, and if they are lost or damaged, you will be reimbursed. Seven days pay in advance, and no soldiering to be expected of the boys.”

“I might just take you up on that, then. Don't need the wagons until later in the year, and the plantings already in. Couple of the boys could go along.”

“Sounds good, Isaah. A wise move on your part. The British were planning to seize what they needed if we didn't cooperate. This is a way for you to get a little money for yourself as well.”

“Should we trust this General Braddock to stick to his word?”

“You can, Isaah. And you have my word as well.”

“Sign me up, Ben.”

“Pass the word, Isaah.” Franklin returned to his meal.

Boone Settlement on the Yadkin River, Colony of North Carolina, April 1755.

The rider approached the log house at a gallop. A man appeared from the cabin, holding a rifle at the ready.

“Howdy, Caleb”

“Hey, Daniel. Got a letter for you from up Pennsylvania way.”

“For me, not for Squire George?”

The man got down from his horse, and handed Daniel the letter. He

opened it, and read the contents.

“Forgetting my manners, Caleb. Water for the horse is over there in that bucket. Can I git you something to eat?”

“No thanky, I got to get back. Much obliged. What's the letter about?”

“Old neighbor of mine, up in Pennsylvania, says that a Mr. Franklin needs teams, wagons, and drivers for some British General. Pay's real good.”

“You gonna go?”

“Have to think on it a bit. Thanks, Caleb”

Later that evening, at the family meal, Daniel broached the subject with his father.

“Sir, I received a letter today from Squire James up in Pennsylavnia.”

“How is our old neighbor doing?”

“Well, Sir, he mentions that a Mr. Franklin is seeking wagons, teams and drivers for the British General Braddock in his expedition against the French.”

“What is that to thee and thine, Daniel?”

“I was thinking I might go.”

“This is not thy affair, Daniel. We are Quakers, and opposed to war. Thy life is here now, not in Pennsylvania.”

“This would not involve fighting, Father, just driving the wagons of supplies. The pay is good.”

“The Devil's wages. Nothing good will come of it. Let this British fight the French – it is not thy affair. War and killing is never thy affair.”

“What about when the Indians killed the Widow Hawkins and her young'uns up on the settlement?”

“That was God's will, Daniel. There is a lesson in that for thee if ye pray upon it. Ye should leave the Indians alone in peace.”

“I don't think they understand that, Sir.”

“They are heathens, but they can be saved. Enough of this discussion. Ye do not have my permission to get mixed up in this affair.”

“Yes, Sir.”

Daniel pushed back from the table, and went outside the cabin.

A month passed. No further word was spoken of the events within the family. Caleb came riding up to the cabin again, and dismounted.

“Howdy, Caleb.” “Dan'l”

“What's bring you out this way?”

Daniel hear his story, then went off to find his Father.

“Squire?” “Yes, son?”

“Caleb rode out with some news, sir.”

“You invited him to stay for supper?” “Yes, Sir.”

“What's the news?

“Major Dobbs, the Governor's son, has organized a company of militia to head up Pennsylvania way to help the British against the French. He'll take me on as a teamster. Pay's real good, and I'll be back by harvest.”

Neither man said anything for a while “Daniel, you know I'm opposed to killing and war...”

“Sir, I'll just be driving a team. There's real soldiers to do the soldiering.”

“Thy mother won't take it well.” “She'll understand. I'll talk to her. Please, Sir.”

“Daniel, thee have gotten this in your craw, and you won't a-let loose of it. Go, then, and be a damn good teamster.”

Daniel turned toward the cabin.

“Daniel...” Yes, sir.”

“Thee are a mighty fine shot. Make sure you save your God-given abilities to shoot straight for game.”

“I will sir, Thank you Sir.

Port of Alexandria, Colony of Virginia, May 29, 1755.

Finally, every one and everything was ready to head west. The news from Wills Creek said the Fort was about ready for use. By June 10, the British expedition had all left the coast, and were heading inland.

Site of Fort Cumberland, Confluence of Wills Creek and Potomack River, westernmost outpost of the British Empire in North America, May 1755.

Governor Dinwiddie, seeing the pending conflicts, had ordered the Virginia Colonial Militia to build a fort at the confluence of Wills Creek and the Potomac on the Maryland side for the purpose of defense, not trade. In August 1754 Governor Dinwiddie provided instructions to Colonel Innes as follows: “There are six swivel guns at Wills Creek belonging to the Ohio Company, which is all we have. You must make use of them.”

Across the Potomac in Virginia was the site of Fort Ohio, a trading outpost of the Ohio Company. It was small, and had limited defenses.

The building of the fort in western Maryland was overseen by Colonel James Innes, of North Carolina. That colony, to Virginia’s south, was a close ally in the defense of the frontier.

Units of the Virginia and North Carolina militia began the process of clearing the high ground, and collecting the logs for a palisade fort. It was hot, back-breaking work. Some of the men went out on hunting party's, to keep the camp supplied with meat. They also kept a wary eye on the Indians.

“Lets get going, boys. General Braddock wants this fort ready for his army, and he's on the way.”

“You want a promotion digging latrines, Seth?” “No, thank you, Sergeant.”

The teamsters brought up another load of logs, cut and dressed by the ax men. They unhooked them from the teams, and went back for more. The men manhandled one of the logs into a hole they had dug, and lashed it to the vertical log to its left. Then they tamped the earth back into the hole, and began digging again. After a

while, the water boy appeared, with two buckets from the river, and a pewter cup. The men of the Virginia militia took a short break.

“Sure wasn't what I signed up for. Thought I would be shooting injuns and Frenchies, not breaking my back in this god-forsaken wilderness so the British could have a nice place to stay when they get here.”

“This will be the jumping off point for the fight against the French. We will hold this place as an outpost of the British Empire.”

“This is a god-forsaken place. Nothing of importance will happen here.”

“Be that as it may, boys, get your asses back to building the wall.”

“Yes, Sargeant” The men scrambled to their feet and headed back to the construction site. The log teams had taken a break to lead the teams down to the river to drink. Now they headed back for more loads. They still had to clear cut the ground around the fort for a distance of 100 years, to provide clear fields of fire, and also build the barracks and storehouse.

The fort had a perimeter of some 160 yards, which required some 650 9-inch average diameter trees to construct. The logs were 18 feet long. The fort and accompanying cleared land would include some 6 acres.

“What will we call this place, Sargeant?”

“Don't rightly know. No one asked us, boys. If it were up to me, it would be Fort Fairfax.”

Dinwiddie’s fort was completed in the fall of 1754 by Innes. The fort was garrisoned by two New York Colonial Militia Companies (Rutherford’s and Clark’s Independent Companies of Foot),

Demerries' Independent Company from South Carolina, and a Maryland Company. It was called Fort Mount Pleasant.

Braddock arrives at the fort, and renames it after his superior, the Duke of Cumberland, Captain-General of the King's Army. Always name the Fort after your boss.

Fort Cumberland, May, 30 1755

"Advance and state your business." The sentries at the gate of the fort were smartly dressed, and knew their business.

The tall, young Colonel of Militia reined in his horse. "Washington, reporting to serve as aide-de-camp to General Braddock."

"Proceed, Sir. General Braddock's headquarters is the log cabin."

Washington rode into the stockade, and headed over to the corral in the corner. He dismounted, and found a bucket of water for the horse. He started to remove the saddle when another militia officer walked up.

"George. Good to see you."

"Good to see you, Paul. Quite a place the boys have built there."

"Home away from home, Sir. Let me take care of your horse. You can report in over at the cabin"

"Thank you." Washington stopped along the way to grab a drink of water for himself from a bucket with a dipper, then headed to the log cabin. He knocked at the door, then ducked his head and entered.

"Colonel Washington, reporting to General Braddock." he told the officer inside.

“General Braddock went out to see the progress of the road expedition, Colonel. He should be back this afternoon.”

“I'll get something to eat then.”

Washington went out, and sought a campfire with a group of blue-coated men with some in buckskins.

“Got any of that to spare for a poor traveler?”

“George! Long time no see. Deer stew suit your taste?”

“Mostly anything would taste good.”

Washington settled down with a pewter plate of the stew, and a piece of bread.

“The fort looks well made”

“There is more to do, but it will serve. We had most of it done, but when Braddock showed up, he loaned us the artificers and the Navy lads, and things went a lot quicker.”

“I understand the expedition left yesterday?”

“Yes, it is officially under way. A vanguard of 600 men under Major Russell Chapman with 50 wagons left yesterday. They took along Sir John St. Clair, Royal Navy Lt. Spendelow, his sailors, and the Native guides. The are tasked to make a road 12 feet wide to Little Meadows .”

“That's about 20 miles” said Washington.

“That's what we reckon. Christopher Gist is the chief guide.”

“Good man.”

“They'll be following the Nemacolin trail west.”

“So, why did Braddock go?”

“We received word back yesterday afternoon that the progress was slow. Supposedly, they managed to wreck three wagons already. General Braddock went out to see for himself. He took three hundred additional troops with him.”

“What's the situation with the Indians?”

“We've had scouting parties out far in advance since we got here, of course. Doesn't seem to be any activity.” They keep to the other side of Wills Creek, and some are on the hills to the East.”

“Just because you haven't seen them doesn't mean they haven't seen us. I suspect that the French know all about our little party.”

“Wouldn't doubt it, George. But I think Braddock has what he needs to teach them a lesson.”

“We'll see, Caleb. This isn't the fields of Europe. I have tried explaining that to the General, and I am not sure he appreciates what that means. Time will tell.”

“George, Smitty - you remember Smitty - is brewing up some of that corn juice of his just outside the gate into the tree line.”

“Now there is something to fear.”
The men laughed.

Fort Presque Isle, New France, early June, 1755

A dispatch from de Contrecoeur dated 18 May stating that a large army from England had arrived in America, and were going to invade the Ohio Country from a forward base at Wills Creek. It

was forwarded to the Governor-General in Quebec.

de Beaujeu issues dispatches to Fort Niagara asking for reinforcements and supplies. 13 boats with troops and supply's were dispatched.

de Contrecoeur reports to de Beaujeu that a British deserter had said that the army is on the move. de Contrecoeur summoned all Compagnies Franches de la Marine officers from all outposts to rally all friendly INatives and report to Fort Duquesne.

de Contrecoeur then met with the Ottawas, Senecas, Delawares, and Potawatamies from Michigan. They pledge their support.orm
The tomahawk has been raised.

Spendlow Camp, 25 miles west from Fort Cumberland, June 11, 1755.

Braddock calls a council of Officers.

“Lt. Orme: send back all baggage not absolutely necessary. Contribute officer's horses for army transport dutys. “

“Yes, Sir.”

Later that day, Captain Orme reported.

“Sir, we gained 100 horses. Two of the six-pounders were sent back back, along with 4 mortars, and some ordnance stores, with escort of the 50 men of the independent companies. Sixteen of the heavy heavy Conestoga farm wagons driven by Pennsylvanians haul the Army's supplys.”

“The column stretches 4 miles in the march. The road building is going slowly. We are sure the French Indians are observing and reporting our progress, but we have not spotted any. There are no raids expected, this far from Fort Duquesne.

Braddock decides to leave slower moving wagons with Dunbar at Little Meadows and press ahead with 1200 light troops.

Colonel Dunbar with his troops and the New York Independent Company were to follow later

British Army Field Camp at Twelve Springs, June 24, 1755

The British forces manage two to seven miles of road a day, then set up a camp near a sources of water. Indian raids become more frequent.

“What were the results of last night's raids, Lieutenant?” asked Colonel Dunbar.

“Sir, we had a wagoner wounded, and others killed. Our Light Horse was sent out, but nothing was spotted. The Indians know the forest too well.

British Army Rock Fort Camp, June 28, 1755, coming back after defeat

What was left of the British Army and the militia staggered back through a heavily forested area.

The French were awaiting orders from Versailles, via Quebec

Sir Peter Halkett, Col of 44th foot, veteran of the 1745 Highland Rebellion was in charge of the baggage (although 2nd in command). He died there with his youngest son. Their bodys would be found years later.

Col. Thomas Dunbar's 48th Regiment of foot set up camp at Great Meadows with the slow moving wagons. He was the sole surviving officer. After heading the retreat back to Fort Cumberland, he

quickly headed in a hurry for the British Army Headquarters in Philadelphia.

Little Meadows

“We are going to leaven most of the baggage here,” said Halkett. We will leave the teamsters, wagons, and the sick, with a guard detachment. We will take supplys for 3 days. Everything else stays.”

Fort Duquesne, Forks of the Ohio, New France, 7 July 1755.

At the Fort, Chiefs Pucksinwah, Athanese, White Eyes, and Pontiac are present with their braves.

“Why does not the French Chief send out troops to ambush these British?”

“I think he fears their numbers, and their big guns. I have heard talk of abandoning the Fort and retreating to Canada.”

de Contrecoeur received the man's news in silence. The British Army with its American auxiliaries was 9 miles away with cannon.

“If this army of the British is as close as you say, with the forces you report, we have no chance of holding this place.”

“Can you request additional troops?”

“There is no time for additional forces to get here from Fort Presque Isle or Le Bouef and we have no way of resisting their artillery. I see no hope but to abandon the fort.”

“But, it is important for the future of New France. If we allow the English to push us back here, they can control the Ohio River. Our path between Quebec and New Orleans will be cut.”

“I know this, mon ami. I do not wish to be the man responsible for losing this position for France.”

“What about your Indian allies?”

“The Sauvages will turn and run from a regular army. They have never faced artillery. I count on them for nothing.”

“How long do you think we have?”

“Days. A day. The British are making very good progress according to our scouts.”

“May God have mercy on our souls.”

When the man entered the commandant's tent, Contrecoeur looked up from his wine cup.

“Captain Beaujeu. Come join me in a cup.”

“Sir. A word?” “Oui.”

“Sir, I would like your permission to lead our Indian allies and whichever of our men volunteer against the redcoats.”

“You seek glory by death in battle, Bequjeu?”

“No, Sir. But we can't just abandon this position. The glory of New France, the lifeline of the colonies is at stake We take the war to the British.”

“This I know. I also know we cannot stop them. They outnumber us. They have cannon. We will die here, and it make no difference.” Contrecoeur drained his wine, and refilled it.”

“I fear that our time has come. We must either retreat or die. I will

put it to the men tomorrow. They
can choose their own course."

"I have your permission to speak to the men, sir?"

"Oui. Each may choose his own path, without dishonor."

Beaujeu turned to leave. "And, you, Sir?"

"I will stay here, regardless. New France expects this of me. My honor and duty remains at this place. I may die, Beaujeu, but I will die obedient to the king's service."

"I salute you, Sir."

Contrecoeur poured more wine, and stared into the fire. Bequjeu went to chiefs of the various tribes.

"Great chiefs. The British General Braddock comes to kill us and burn the Fort. He has many men and cannon. There is no time to get reinforcements from Canada. Will you fight with me against the British?"

"We will fight the British with you."

British Army at Turtle Creek, July 7, 1755

The British cross to the west bank of Monongahela river at a bend, turn north, and cross the Monongahela again. It is heavily wooded, with poor visibility.

"Lieutenant Colonel Gage go forward ahead with chosen men to secure the crossing."

"Yes, Sir"

St. Clair's workmen are busy constructing a road for the wagons

and cannon.

The Army crossed fthe ords and reformed into column, with drums & fifes, and continued into forest

“Over there, General, is Frasier's cabin. We're getting close.”

“Thank you Mr. Washington.”

Near Fort Duquesne, Forks of the Ohio, New France, July 8, 1755.

“What did you think of the words of our French brother Beaujeu?”

“I have thought long on his words. I will join him in this battle against the English.”

The Indians sat in silence around the campfire.

“These white men from across the great water - they are not like us.”

“They are men, but they do not think like us. The French - they come to us for trade, and they seek our permission to hunt and trap. They provide many things that are good, like muskets. They marry our women and live with us.”

“This is true. Have you seen their big camp, called Quebec?”

“I have been there. They built many houses of stone. They look like they will be staying.”

“Yes. They travel the great river to its end, and they have another camp there, I am told.”

“A man of our tribe has been there. It is called New Orleans and Louisiana. He said it was a big camp, and there were many ships

and many people of all types and colors."

"It is different with these British. They come here in large groups. They do not seek to live among the People. They try to "buy" our land. I do not understand this. Do they think we own the land?"

"The land is owned by no man. It is for all of the People to share."

"This is true. Do you think that the French and the English are People?'

"I believe they were made by the same Great Spirit that made all men. I believe they were placed in the land across the Great Water to live apart from the People. I believe that when they built their great canoes and came across the Great Water, they angered the Great Spirit."

"This may be so."

Then the men leaned back to stare at the patterns in the stars. It was a brilliantly clear night. The Great Spirit choose not to reveal his intentions to them.

"The People were happy before these men came. The People will be happy again when they leave."

"So, we join our French brothers and fight against these English?"

"I have thought on this, and I believe it is best for the People if we do so"

"Will there come a time when we fight against our French brothers?"

"That time also may come."

"It was a better time for the People before these men came."

“There are legends among my people that men like these have come before, many times. Some stayed for a while and left, some died here. I do not think this coming is new.”

“Our Teller-of-Tales keeps the story of how long ago the People came from the setting sun, and how we hunted the big hairy beasts with the long noses”

“A warrior of our tribe has traveled for many changings of the moon towards the setting sun. He said there are many people like us in this land, and another great water to the west. Maybe some day the People will travel there.”

“The People have seen many strange things on their journeys, but I think these white men are the strangest.”

“It is a time of challenge and change.”

“I fear this is true.”

“We will seek truth and guidance from the Great Spirit. He will not abandon his people.”

British Army across the Monongahela, July 7, 2 pm

The British Army vanguard meets the Indians. There is a French officer dressed as an Indian but with gorget. Troops are dispersed to the left and right.

“Troops, form a line, prepare to fire upon the enemy. Grenediers forward. Fix bayonets.

“1st rank kneel, fire into woods. Bring up the 6 pounders and the motors. Fire into the woods on both sides.”

“General Gage, I hear volley fire ahead. We must be engaged.”

“Captain Morris, go forward and report back what is happening.”

The French and their Indian allies fire into the British from both flanks. There is mass confusion in the ranks, as the casualties quickly add up. There is heavy firing and many war whoops.

“Lt. Col Burton, go forward with 300 troops to support.”

“Yes, General.”

“Halket, I am going forward to the engagement, you are in temporary command of the troops and artillery. Be ready to send the troops forward at a quick notice”

Braddock goes forward to see what's happening. His staff officers including Washington go with the General.

Gage sees he's outflanked., and orders a withdrawal to reform ranks 30 yards to rear. His troops, anxious to get out of the killing zone, run into Burtons' men coming up to support.

Burton tries to form a firing line, but there is mass confusion and panic. Officers are falling quickly.

“Color bearers, 44th go left, 48th go right. Troops reform on your banners.”

The French & Indians are invisible in the forests to the sides. There is heavy smoke over battlefield. It is bayonet versus tomahawk as the troops don't have time to reload.

Then the baggage and ammunition train is attacked in the rear, leading to panic among the wagoners.

“Men! Deploy those 12 pounders to fire into the trees on both sides. Rapid fire!

Col. Halkett and Lt. James are both killed. Braddock has several horses shot out from under him, but is still trying to manage the fight. He tries to get 150 men in some sort of order to clear the hill to the right, but the confusion, panic, smoke and noise are too much.

“You men. Support the gunners on the left. The 6 pounders have been captured.

“General Braddock. My Virginians can engage those Indians on our flanks in their own way.”

“Maintain the line, Mr. Washington.”

Lt. Col Burton gets men to follow him to the rising ground on the right by Braddocks order, but is wounded, and the men return. Braddock is shot through the arm into his chest, while rallying the troops men. It is 4:00pm.

There are no s senior officers except Washington. The cannon fall silent. There is mass confusion and panic as the troops cross back across the Monongahela

Braddock, Orme, and Morris are put into a cart. Braddock's papers are dumped to make room. A small chest remains.

“Mr. Washington. Get the troops back to Dunbar's camp, about 54 miles back, and we can regroup. Form a rear guard to cover.”

“Yes, General.”

The French lose control of the Natives as they run out of woods onto the battlefield to kill the wounded. The Regimental & Kings colors are lost.

Wounded French officers are left in the woods.

“Lieutenant, Stop the looting by the troops. We need to get the wounded back to the Fort.”

“Yes, Mr. Dumas.”

“We will hide the body of Commandant de Beaujeu in a ravine, and come back for him later. I am concerned about a counterattack. ”

Sergeants of Comp Franche de la Marine seize power kegs from the gun's locations. They unseated the guns from the carriages. The Natives, following the British rout, discover some kegs of rum.

“You three. Run back to the fort and get nails so we can spike these guns”

“Oui, Sergeant.”

Meanwhile, the Inative warriors have crossed the river behind the retreating British, and ransacked the baggage. They find the rum rations.

Monongahela River, Province of Pennsylvania July 9, 1755.

Colonel Thomas Dunbar was in charge of the 48th Regiment. Braddock leaves him with the bulk of the supplies, and hastens to the Fort. Dunbar established a camp, and assessed the material and the men. He awaited Braddock's orders.

Soon, wounded men began to trickle in, and distant firing could be heard.

Dunbar interviewed the retreating troops, and got many different stories. He was told Braddock was wounded, and Washington, not even a British officer, took over. He weighed his choices and decided not to launch a counter-attack against the fort. Putting the

wounded in the wagons meant leaving more of the supplys. He set off for Fort Cumberland, down the road they had just constructed.

Western Colony of Pennsylvania, South of Beaver Creek, border of New France and the British Empire in North America July 9, 1755.

A French officer was running through the woods, towards the retreating British troops. He had been overtaken by his Indian allies a few miles back. Now the overwhelming sense of battle and danger was leaving him as he stopped to catch his breath. In the heat of battle he had fought savagely, but now he was just tired.

He would not have been recognized as an Officer and Nobleman of France, sitting with his back to a massive oak, dressed much like his Indian allies. His face was even painted as the savages as done. He was tired, bone weary, and drenched in sweat. The British had fought well, then broke and ran. The Native troops pursued them in search of loot and scalps. They could not be controlled by any power on earth when the blood lust was upon them The Officer had passed body's, British body's, stripped, mutilated, scalped. The Indians fought differently than Europeans, and had little respect for their a defeated enemy. It was important to them to mutilate their enemies, so they could not take revenge in the afterlife.

This was not a formal war, when gentlemen met on the field of battle, and the rules were clear. This was butchery. Of course, the British had come to drive him and his friends from Fort Duquesne, and to deny his country, France, the Ohio River. Men had carried the old World disputes across the ocean to this new land. New France was beautiful, and he could have started a new life there, but he volunteered to lead men against the pending British invasion. Here he was, in some god-forsaken land, fighting men he had more in common with than his allies, the Indians, the savages.

Thirst drove him to get up. He started back toward the Fort, and

came across a small stream, where he got down and drank deeply, and splashed water over his head and arms.

Then, he saw the body. The man was propped against a tree, and had an arrow sticking from his chest.

The officer crossed the stream, and approached the man. He reached out to touch him, but the body fell over. The officer checked the man's pockets, hoping to find who he was. He found General Braddocks papers, including instructions from King George, and a map of the fort. There were some words in English, which he could not read. The man's eyes opened, and he looked directly into the officer's eyes. He said something, and then died.

The officer put the paper in his own pocket, laid the man down on the ground, and crossed the man's hands on his chest. He said a small prayer for the man's soul, turned and was violently sick. After he had recovered his strength, he drank a little more water, and set off again for the Fort.

About 43 French and their Indian allies were killed that day. The British losses were much higher.

He would send the papers to Quebec as soon as possible.

Jumonville Glen, July 13, 1755.

After Braddock dies, he is buried in the road, and wagons and teams run over the spot to conceal It. The troops don't want his body to be desecrated.

Fort Cumberland, Wills Creek, Westernmost Outpost of the British Empire in North America, July 17, 1755.

Survivors of the battle begin coming into Fort Cumberland with the bad news.

When the immensity of the event was finally grasped, the Fort Commander began to make plans and swing into action.

A wounded officer gave a full account of the affair.

Braddock, before he died, gave Captain Ord a written order to destroy all the Kings supply's, so they did not fall into the hands of the enemy.

“All the artillery and baggage were lost. We know of 456 killed, 422 wounded. Of the 86 officers 26 killed were killed, including Braddock, and 37 wounded. There were only 4 women surviving, out of 50.rock fortification

“Captain, you are in charge of the Fort. Hold out as long as you can. I am going to Philadelphia to report on the events. That report will have to go to England as soon as possible,” Said Dunbar.

The militia officer in charge of the Fort hastily wrote a report to the Virginia Governor, and gave it to one of his sergeants to take to Williamsburg. He was to alert settlers such as Creasap. With Braddock's troops wiped out, and the supplys lost and scattered, he would not be able to hold the Fort if the French followed up.

“What are we going to do, Sir?”

“We will hold this Fort as long as we can, until relieved or wiped out.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Ask the commissary officer to come by with the list of provisions we have. I have already written to the Governor at Williamsburg to see if we can get some more troops.”

“Ask the carpenters to put together a few rafts and put them down on the Potomac side. We may need to get over to the Ohio Company Warehouse on the other side in somewhat of a hurry.”

“We might also have to go downriver to Shawnee Oldtown or further.”

“Better downriver that up, Sir.”

“Also, get our best Scouts, and sent them west to keep an eye on who's coming down the road.”

“Sir.”

“If the French get all our cannons and bring them back to use against, do we have a chance, Sir?”

“Get going. You have a lot of work to do.”

“Sir.”

The medical officer sought out the Colonel Dunbar.

“Sir, a nurse noted something interesting as we were treating the men. We've been retrieving about the same number of French slugs as British. Some of those men were killed by their own Army.”

“How do you know the difference”

“Different caliber, Sir. The French use a smaller round.”

“Put that in your causality report, but don't mention it to anyone.”

“Yes, Sir. And, Sir, the body's are piling up. Can you assign some more men to the burial detail?

The cemetery was outside the Fort's western gate.

“I'm finishing up a report for the Governor, Sergeant. What's the news.Any good news? “

“No Sir. Sorry Sir. Well, actually, our scouts have seen no French or Indians coming towards the Fort at all. ”

“I'm hastening to Philadelphia with the King's Troops to inform the Governor and my Superiors. We need to get a dispatch off to England as soon as possible. I will leave the wounded in your care.”

“Have a safe journey, Sir.”

Dunbar mounted his horse and rode off.

“He wants to relate his side of the incident first.” said the guard at the gate.

Western Maryland, near the border with Pennsylvania, July 1755.

His breathing was as ragged as ever, but the pain seemed to have stopped. A light rain fell, and it was dark. He had been hit by a French ball in the chest. It seemed to have gone completely through, but the wound made a sucking sound every time he tried to breath. His mate had helped him here, north and east of the battle, and hid him in a hollow next to a big rock outcropping. He had gone for help, but had not come back. Day and night blurred into a sea of pain and fog.

He still had his musket, but his water bottle was empty, and his lips were cracked and bleeding. Every time he tried to shift his position, lightning bolts of pain shot through his chest and shoulder. He lay back against the big rock outcropping and closed his eyes for the last time.

Philadelphia, Colony of Pennsylvania, August, 1755.

Ben Franklin had compiled the type for the day's newspaper, and had retired to his favorite tavern for a quick beer. His assistant was printing copies. A man in buckskins enters the tavern.

“Mr. Franklin!”

“Jeremiah. Returned from the French affair, I presume. Good to see you again.”

“Sir, I bring news from the frontier, and it is not good.”

“Sit down, have an ale, and tell me about it.”

“Sir, it went very badly. Very few of the British returned to Fort Cumberland. It is now a vast hospital with a new cemetery. Braddock his self was killed, and buried in the road. Almost all of the supplies, wagons, horses and guns were lost. Some of our teamsters made it back, and a few of the horses. It was a disaster,

Sir. “

“My gGod, man...”

“When I left Fort Cumberland, there had been no attempt to attack it. They remain vigilant. Washington is in charge.”

“They all died, sir, all of them. They're gone...”

Franklin sat in stunned silence. He ordered another ale for the man and asked if he needed food.

“This is an unmitigated disaster for the the British and the Colonies.”

“Jeremiah, if you need a place to stay, come to my house.”

“Thank you sir, but I'll ride out to the farm and see the wife.”

Franklin paid the tab and headed out to re-do the day's newspaper.

Near Hancock, Colony of Maryland, 1756

The colony of Maryland provided an appropriation to build a Fort, which was approved by Governor Sharpe. It was named Fort Calvert. It followed the French fortification style. It was garrisoned by the British 60th Regiment of Foot, and Maryland Militia. The Fort was never attacked. It was later renamed Fort Frederick.

East of Hancock, on Route 40, October, 1958.

It had only taken the family about an hour to drive to Fort Frederick on Route 40, from Cumberland. It was now a state park. It looked substantial enough, built with stone. They parked and went through the large wooden gate. Cannons were spaced along the walls, and there were several log buildings. The boy took a series of pictures, then they went into the Park office. They had displays and history's, and several small cannon model for sale.

“Dad, can I get one of these little cannons?”

“Certainly, son.”

Carlisle, Colony of Pennsylvania, 1758.

The British had built a Fort at Bedford during the French & Indian war, under the command of Captain Henry Bouquet. General John Forbes, at the fort, was ordered to retake Fort Duquesne.

General Forbes was determined to avoid Braddock's mistakes. He built a sturdy, defensible Fort, called Fort Ligonier, and then began the construction of a road to Fort Duquesne. Along it at intervals were fortified supply depots. He accumulated 6,000 men, including British regulars and colonial militia, lead by George Washington. He missed the troops heading to the west, due to illness.

“Damn this ague. I wish I were going with you, Henry. I'll come along as soon as I can.”

“We can handle this, General. Get yourself well. We will not repeat Braddocks mistakes.”

Previously, a reconnaissance force was soundly defeated by the French at Fort Duquesne.

Lt. Colonel Henry Bouquet inspected the troops, and gave the order to March.”

“We will avenge Braddock's death, men”

A cheer went up from the troops as they set out.

Fort Duquesne, disputed western territory, Colony of Pennsylvania, 1758

British forces enter the French Fort without opposition led by Major Frances Halkett. Halket had left from Fort Bedford, and taken the time to construct a proper road. He set u guarded supply

depots along the way. It was several years after this disaster, but the battlefield was recognizable.

Halkett, Senior & son were found, recognized by an artificial tooth

Fort Niagara, colony of New France, at the mouth of the Niagara river on Lake Ontario, July 1759.

The capture of Fort Niagara in French Canada by the British in 1759 forced the French to abandon the Ohio Country. There had been a 19-day siege, and the relief force sent by the French had been ambushed. Besides switching the balance of power in North America, the Fort became a loyalist base during the revolutionary war.

London, England, 1763.

King George III issues a proclamation forbidding further settlement beyond the mountains and demanding the return of settlers who had already crossed the Alleghenies. This edict was not well received by the colonists.

On the border between the Colonies of Pennsylvania and Maryland, 39 degrees, 43 minutes, 20 seconds North, 101 degrees, 43 minutes West, August, 1767

Jacob had only recently joined the Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon expedition. They offered him good British coin to drive the wagon and dig holes. It was vastly more interesting than life on the farm. Mr. Mason and Mr. Dixon told him where to dig to set the markers. The Natives who accompanied the expedition made him nervous.

“Ok, that's it, then. Here's the spot. Crown stone, if you please.”

“That's one of the bigger, fancy ones, Jacob. We put a stone every mile, and a crown stone every 5 miles.”

The men struggled the large stone out of the wagon. “It goes with the “M” on the Maryland side.”

“Where's Maryland,” Jacob asked.

“To the South”

Jacob looked up at the sun, and rotated the stone in the hole.

“Why are we doing this, again, Sir?”

Mr. Mason explained. “There was a disagreement between Mr. Penn and Mr. Calvert about where the borders of their lands actually lay. They could not reach an agreement, so the Crown intervened. We were hired to survey the exact line, and place these stones to mark it. The crown stones were made in England and shipped here.”

“How do you reckon where to put the stones, Sir?”

“Astronomical observation and triangulation. It's really quiet simple...”

An hour later, Jacob was really sorry he asked. Mason was obviously very much in love with his work.

“How far do you reckon to go?” Jacob asked.

“The King's land grant extends to the Ohio River.”

“Indians claim this land as theirs.”

“Yeah, we'll deal with that when it happens.”

Shortly after that, an Indian war party strongly suggested to the men that they return to where they came from. That's why Maryland does not extend to the Ohio River, in the west.

Flatbush, Brooklyn, Colony of New York, British Empire in North America, August 27, 1776.

General Charles Lee hated to be the bearer of bad news. In this case, he enjoyed it. He had been passed over for command of the Continental Army in favor of Washington, unfairly, he thought. He had served with the 55th Regiment of Foot in England, and with the British Army in the Seven Years War against the fortresses at Louisbourg, Ticonderoga, and Montreal. He had fought with the Portuguese Army, and for the Polish King. Washington's experience was with colonial troops. Now he was able to point out a major strategic error on Washington's part.

“General Washington, we hold New York, but this cursed place is surrounded by water, and General Howe's brother, Admiral Howe, has too many ships. They can shift their troops around at will. They command the sea, and can do what they wish on land.”

Washington was deep in thought. “You're right, of course. We need to get our troops back to where we can fight Howe on our terms, not his. Good day, General.”

Washington rode to the headquarters position of General Alexander at the Old Stone House.

“General, I can't overemphasize the importance of holding the British for as long as you can. We will regroup at the Brooklyn Heights.”
“I understand, General Washington. My men will give you the time you need. We don't want to lose this war just as it starts.”

“How many troops do you have, Anderson?”

“About 400 men, sir, but the best damn troops on this continent. The Maryland & Virginia Rifle Regiment. Backwoodsmen. Fight like savages, Sir ”

“Admiral Howe has 88 frigates. I understand General Grant has some 34,000 men south of Brooklyn. These will be Regulars, and those Hessian mercenaries. There will be artillery. I can't spare you any.”

“General Washington, I know where to get artillery if I need it.” Anderson smiled.

“Williamson, I hate to ask this of you. It would be an understatement to say you are outnumbered. There is no one else.”

“General, leave me to my duty. You should be going. We can't afford to lose you.”

“I salute you, General” Washington mounted his horse, looking back once at Anderson's ragged small group.

Anderson returned the officer's salute. “Major Gist, we fight a delaying action at this point, to allow General Washington to get the rest of the Army safely away. The success or failure of our independence hinges on what we do today. If Washington is captured, he will be hung as a traitor. Organize the men. Tell them what is expected of them.”

The small group of frontiersmen approached the British artillery position at Gowanus Creek. through the woods from the side and the back. Their buckskin clothing blended into the background of the foliage. The firing of the battery covered any noise they may have made. About 200 yards away, some of the men took firing positions as the rest advanced. “Remember, men, get the officers first. We will deal with the gunners.” The group of Western Maryland Volunteers was recently arrived from Flintstone and Shawnee Old Town, and were friends, neighbors and relations

under Captain Michael Cresap. This was their first action against regular troops, although not their first time at war. The Maryland Independent Company was lead by Daniel Boone.

The small detachment crept closer to the British position. At a signal from their officer, the riflemen fired as the cannons fired, and the British officers crumbled. Then the other frontiersmen charged among the gunners with tomahawk, war club, and knife. It was over in no time. The gunners had no chance.

“Come on, men, get this cannon turned around. Our gunners are a'coming to get them working again.”

The frontiersmen wheeled the cannon around, as artillery officers from Anderson's command ran to service the guns.

At the British command position, General Cornwallis sat on his horse, and surveyed the set-piece battle. It would soon be over, according to his plans, and he could retire to his evening meal.

“Major. Why has our battery stopped firing upon the rebels?”

“I don't know, General.”

“Signal them to resume firing.”

“Sir!”

“There was no response sir.”

“Well get down there and tell them to resume firing or they will all be flogged.”

“Sir!”

The officer rode off quickly in the direction of the guns. He was within 150 yards of the position when a rifle shot picked him off

his horse. At about the same time the guns resumed firing in the opposite direction. The British command position came under fire, and the General was almost unhorsed when a shell burst near him.

“Damn it all! What are those bloody idiots doing? Who is in charge there? Hand me my glass! I shall have them all hanged.”

“They...they do not have their regulation uniforms on. They....are... rebels!”

“General, I respectfully suggest we retreat out of range.”

“This is outrageous. I want my guns back. Send troops down there to take them back.”

“Right away sir.”

At the artillery position, the frontiersmen started back to the American lines. “Come on, boys. Let these gentlemen who know what they are doing harass the redcoats. We're needed back in the line”

Later that afternoon, the heat and smoke hung heavy over the battlefield. Parched throats and tongues yearned for water, but there was little to be had. The British had charged the American line repeatedly, and had been repeatedly repulsed with heavy losses. The field between the lines was strewn with red uniformed bodies. The British Commander's patience was running thin. His command included the 44th Regiment of Foot who had fought at Ft. Duquesne.

“Second Grenadiers, fix bayonets! Forward!”

“They're coming again, boys” Lt. Ridgeley steadied the line. The opposing British line advanced to the tempo of drums. They vastly outnumbered the Americans facing them. General Alexander walked to the front of his troops. “Men, General Washington has

asked us to hold the British here. There are too many troops for us to defeat. We can retreat or surrender and possibly loose the war right now, or we can stand and fight. Gentlemen, I am not backing down or running away. This is the Maryland Line. Who stands with me?"

The shout from the American troops was overwhelming – the oncoming British line actually missed a step. Then they leveled their muskets and continued. The frontiersmen with their rifles opened up at 200 yards. "Kill the officers first, men." The British line opened fire when the separation was less than 50 yards. "No prisoners, no prisoners" The bayonet charge overwhelmed the American line. Almost all were killed. None had fallen back. Washington had the time he needed. Few of the men would be coming back to their wives, farms, and homesteads in Western Maryland.

British fortifications in New York City, 1776.

"General Howe, an officer to see you sir."

"Send him in."

"The officer came in and saluted."

"General, I am Colonel Thomas Ord. I fought with Amherst at Ticonderoga and Crown Point. Most importantly, Sir, I fought with Braddock at Fort Duquesne."

"That nasty cock-up. Good thing he was killed, the King would have had him hanged"

"With all due respect, Sir, The warfare on the frontier was very different for what we trained for in Europe."

"A good soldier adapts."

“Yes Sir, but we never had time. That's ancient history, Sir. But I do have on thing to tell you.”

“Well, do it man. I have a war to win.”

“Sir, I was in command of Braddocks artillery at the battle of the Monongahela. Everything happened so fast. With Braddock down, control broke down. We had to abandon the artillery, and stores to make room for the wounded in the wagons.”

“I know the story. You lost all the artillery and stores, most of the wagons, and a large number of men. Besides, Braddock lost the Army payroll. The French probably got it and and took it to Quebec.”

“No sir.”

“What do you mean. Make it snappy, Man.”

“Sir, I buried the payroll and drew a map before coming back to Fort Cumberland.”

“What? The gold is still there?”

“Yes, Sir. Near Fort Pitt.”

“My god, man. The payroll for an Army for a year.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“That means you could go back and find it?”

“Yes sir. I need some men and supplies, and an order from you to the Commander of Fort Pitt, saying I am on a secret mission.”

“Interesting, let me think this over. It would certainly ease some of the costs of this war. It could also get a man a title and a castle.”

“Two men, Sir.”

“Of course.”

“Leave me a list of what you want, and come back tomorrow.”

Near Forks of the Ohio, Western Colony of Pennsylvania, 1776.

“You boys looking for something particular?”

Ord was confused. He never heard anybody coming. It was a farmer, and three other men, probably his sons. They all had Kentucky long rifles held at rest.
Colonel Thomas Ord, Sir, here at the orders of General Howe in New York City. What would the British Army be interested in here.”

“We're looking for some of General Braddock's papers, Sir, lost in the expedition against Fort Duquesne.”

“The gold ain't here, son. I've looked. I watched Braddock die, and helped plant him. Maybe you should be heading back ”

“Maybe you should be heading back to New York City.”

American Army Headquarters, Valley Forge, Colony of Pennsylvania, British North America, December, 1777, Commander's tent.

There was a knock on the pole. Washington looked up from the papers on his desk, and said, “Enter.”

A staff officer entered and saluted. “You wanted to see me sir?”

“Come in Alex. Have a chair. Some wine?”

“Thank you, sir” The staff officer poured two glasses of wine, took one, and handed the other to the general. Then he sat down in one of the chairs by the fireplace. The general remained at his desk.

“There are days when I think our worst enemy is the Congress and not the British, Alex.” the general said.

“More money problems, General?”

“They haven't agreed to send us any money yet, and no supplies are coming in. How are the men, Alex?”

“They're tired and cold, sir. They would rather be fighting...”
“I know. The British learned to respect us, but now they are in Philadelphia with decent houses and food, and we are in the god-forsaken camp”

“Will the British come out against us, sir?”

“Not before Spring. Howe is no fool. He is enjoying Philadelphia while he can, knowing we get weaker every day. His spies tell him what we do. Even 'tho he is only 20 miles away, he won't move against us. Not yet.”

“He was lucky at Brandywine and Chad's Ford, Sir.”

“He won, Alex. But in turn he learned to respect the fighting ability of our Continentals. We have demonstrated that they are a match for the British regulars and their mercenaries on the field.”

Both men stared into the fire.”What will happen in the Spring, sir?”

“Those of us still alive will fight again. Money, Alex, money is the key. If those gentlemen could ever agree to send us money for supplies....”

“We need a better method for arranging for funds, General”

“Well said, Mr. Hamilton. You work on that. But, in the meantime, would you give these dispatches to a courier to take to the Continental Congress at York. I don't know if it will do any good, but I have to emphasize again how the men suffer while they debate endlessly.” Washington handed a packet of sealed letters to his orderly.

“I'll get these to a courier right away, General.” The orderly turned to leave.

“There are times, Alex, when I wish I had never accepted this position. Then I wish I was still seeing to my farm in Virginia. But, sometime the price of freedom...”

“I'm glad you accepted the position, General. The men respect you. They'll follow you to hell, Sir.”

“Sometimes I wonder, Alex.”

General Washington stared at the papers on his desk again. Then, he got up and put on his coat and headed outside. He wanted to see how his men were fairing. The cold wind hit him as he walked down the porch steps, and headed into the camp.

“There goes the General,” a ragged soldier said as Washington passed. “I bet he has a fine fire and a good wine in his place.”

“He's a good leader, Harry.” said the another soldier.

“He's a Virginia and a politician,” said the first soldier, his New England accent becoming noticeable.

“What makes him think he is a general. He's a rank amateur.”

“He fought with the British against the Frenchies and the Indians back in '55. He knows how the British fight. Them other politicians in Philadelphia wouldn't have made him General if they hadn't thought he could do the job.”

“None of them other politicians wanted to be out her when the musket balls were flying. They wanted to be back at their nice warm houses in Philadelphia. Now Howe and his soldiers are in Philadelphia, enjoying those warm houses and the food and the ladies. And we are freezing out here in nowhere.”

They moved a little closer to the fire. Washington entered the cabin being used as a hospital for the sickest men.

Valley Forge, Colony of Pennsylvania, British North America, Hospital Cabin, December, 1777.

The smell hit him when he opened the door. He fought down the need to gag, stepped in, and closed the door behind him. It wasn't much warmer inside the cabin, and candles provided a weak illumination. It was probably better not to see. The coughing was continuous.

“General Washington, Sir,” The surgeon rose from his small desk.

“Please be seated, sir. How are the men? How many are sick”

“They are....General, let's talk outside.”

The surgeon donned his coat, and they went out to the porch of the cabin. “General, none of the men inside there are going to get any better. Their wounds are not healing, they have the bloody flux and the ague. We have almost no medicine. We...we don't have much food to give them.”

The general stood silently.”So, that is a house of death, sir?”

“That's where we put the worst cases, General. There are twenty in there now. We'll bury most of them before the week's out. The beds will be filled again right away.”

“What do you need, Sir?'

“Firewood, porridge, medicines, clean linens, ...God's mercy, Sir.”

“These are my my men, sir. They fought for me, for their country, for their freedom, why can't we...”:

Washington saw the doctor's eyes. “I am sorry, Sir. I know you are doing what you can. I am doing what I can to get you more supplies. Maybe God will be merciful to both of us.”

Washington turned to go back inside the hospital.

“Sir, you might not want to go back in there, you could pick up..”

“These are my men, sir!” Washington snapped. “... I'm sorry. Give me a few minutes with these boys”

Washington stood in the near darkness of the room, among the dying. He walked down the row of men, lying on the ground on blankets, pausing to say a silent prayer for each one.

“Colonel? Colonel Washington?” came a weak voice. Washington knelt down beside a grizzled old veteran. “Do I know you, sir?”

“Can I have some water?” the old man said in a weak voice. Washington found the bucket with the dipper, and helped the man to drink.

“I was with you up at Fort Duquesne, Colonel. When the Frenchies and them Injuns came running out of the wood, and killed General Braddock. Harris, sir. Virginia volunteers.”

“Harris. You fought well us then?” Washington didn't want to correct the man's misunderstanding of his rank. He didn't remember the man.

“I was a wagoner, sir. Mr. Franklin said we would get paid to drive wagons for the Brits...” The man was wracked with a coughing fit, and Washington held him upright. “Sorry, Colonel, I caught this ague. I'll be fit to fight again soon. Just need some rest.”

“I remember sir, when most of the officers were dead, and the men were running in a panic with the savages scalping them and all, you got us out of there, sir.”

“Back to Fort Cumberland. There weren't many of us got back, were there, Harris?”

“No, sir. And we kept leaving the wagons and supplies behind. We buried the cannons, and ruined the powder so the savages couldn't use it. Burned a lot of food. Wish we had that now, sir.”

“Braddock was a brave man with good soldiers, but he just wouldn't listen about fighting in the woods.”

“You're right, sir. I guess you're still teaching the Lobsters about fighting in America, eh?”

“We're trying, Harris. What did you do after the defeat?”

“Buried the General's special luggage sir. Made it back to Fort Cumberland with the rest, and moved back to Frederick for safety. After things settled down, I went back to the mountains with a sweet girl, Sir. We was married in Frederick Town, and I built us a cabin on a hill west of Fort Cumberland. Had a couple of kids. One day, when I got back from hunting, I found the cabin burned, and the wife and kids all dead, sir. Injuns, sir. I wandered in the woods for weeks, then, out of my head. Came back east, and joined the

Army, sir. My family is all gone now. Fought in the line in New York and New Jersey, and at Brandywine, sir. Took care of some of them lobsterbacks, and them German's too."

The soldier fell into another coughing fit, and Washington gave him another sip of water after it had passed. He thought about the soldier's story. "What special luggage did you mean, soldier?"

"Braddock's personal luggage sir – his silver, and the payroll."

"It was buried? I thought the French had gotten it."

"No, sir. We buried it, me and Smithy. Course Smitty had an arrow in him, and died before we got finished. Young Boone found me, and helped me back to the rest of the men."

"Do you know where it's buried? The British Army payroll?"

"We drawed a map, sir." The man was having trouble keeping his eyes open. Washington laid him back down gently, and pulled his blanket up around him. He stayed beside him for a while, deep in thought. Then we stood, and walked out the door.

He passed the men huddled at the fire. "Take some firewood to the hospital, please."

"General, we ain't got no firewood to spare, and..."

"Now! ...gentlemen" Washington's face turned dark.

"Yes, sir." Then men scrambled to find firewood.

Washington had a restless night, reliving the chaotic events of the Braddock expedition and the defeat near Fort Duquesne. He remembered his time on the western frontier as a surveyor for Lord Fairfax, and his negotiations and battles with the French. The British were their allies then and the French were their enemies.

Now, that was reversed. Many of the old memories came back. In the morning, he went back to the hospital, and greeted the surgeon, who looked like he had had no sleep at all. Out behind the hospital, men were already busy digging in the hard, frozen ground.

“You look at death's door, Sir” said Washington.

“A strange way of putting it, General. For these men, I am death's door. Five of them passed through that door last night”

Washington bowed his head, and was silent for a while.

“God rest their souls.” “Amen”

“I came to speak with Mr. Harris” We spoke yesterday. We had served together on the frontier.”

The surgeon motioned with his head toward a line of five pathetically small burdens, wrapped in dirty blankets.

“Sorry, sir, he was one of the five souls”

Valley Forge, Colony of Pennsylvania, British North America, December, 1777, General Washington's Tent.

“You sent for me, sir?” The orderly entered the General's office. His cloak was wet from the drizzle outside. He stood by the fire to get somewhat drier than he was.

Washington looked up from his papers, and put the quill pen back in the holder. “Alex, Good morning. I was just writing a letter to Martha. She is taking tolerable good care of the farm. I want to go back there for good when this damn war is over. How are you? How are the men?”

“Morning, Sir. I am fine. The men are doing as well as can be

expected."

"Did we get any response to our correspondences with the Gentlemen of the Congress?"

"No, sir. Nothing has come in yet."

"Those rascals would debate the second coming of Jesus. Alex, I need a scout for a special mission. Who is the head of Scouts?"

"That's Crawford, Sir."

"William Crawford? Can you have him see me?"

"Certainly, Sir... and, sir? I have been giving some thought to that matter we talked about. The source of funds and all."

Washington waved him out. Hamilton pulled his soaked cloak closer around him, and headed back into the drizzle. Washington went back to his correspondence.

A short while later, there was another knock on the door. Washington looked up, and said "Come."

"You wanted to see me, Sir?"

"William. How have you been?" Washington got up from his desk, and came forward to shake the man's hand. "Would you have a wine?"

"Well, Sir. Yes, Please." Washington poured two glasses of wine and handed one to Crawford.

"To the surveying of the Western Frontier" suggested Washington, raising his glass.

"And to the Virginia Line!" Both men drank.

“William, I have need of a resourceful man would can take a confidential message a long distance down south and to the western Frontier. Do we have any such?”

“I believe I know the man, General. Maryland Volunteer, frontiersman. Crack shot. Independent. What do you want him to do?”

“Send him in to see me William.”

“Yes, Sir. ... and, General?”

“Yes, William?”
“I was thinking of going back west myself. That's were I belong, more than here. I would like to be posted to Fort Pitt, if that's possible sir.”

“I would hate to lose your services, William. We go back a long way, don't we? We survived the Braddock Expedition, and you went back to take Fort Duquesne with Forbes, didn't you?”

“Yes, Sir. Fought the Indians during Pontiac's War, too. I have a cabin on the Yough River. Been scouting all over that territory. That's where I belong, Sir.”

“Right now, there are few of us where we belong, William, but I will see what I can do for you. Good luck.”

“Thank you, General.” The men shook hands, and Crawford went back outside.

Washington went back to his desk. He finished a letter, and carefully sealed it, then wrapped it in oiled leather.

Again, there was a knock on the door of his office, and Washington looked up and said “Come.”

A rangy frontiersman entered, dressed in deerskin. His face and hands were darkly tanned, as if his entire life had been spent outdoors. He had a beaded belt with knife and tomahawk, in addition to his powderhorn. He set his long rifle down against the wall, next to the door.

“Colonel Crawford said you wanted to parley with me, sir.” he said. “Evarts the name.”

“Where are you from, sir?”

“The frontier, General. Was borned up around Fort Cumberland, along Wills Creek. Got a brother up that way.”

“You served with us, Evart?”

“Yes, General. Went with the Maryland boys when they marched to help you up in New York. I was one of the lucky ones who got away. Been around since then. Doing soldiering.”

Washington glanced at the man's rifle.

“How are you at soldiering, Mr. Evart?”

“Ain't no good in the line, sir. Standing there, waiting to get shot at. I do scouting, sir, and I take care of the British officers.”

“How many British officers have you 'taken care of ' Mr. Evart?”

“Don't rightly know, General. Starting putting these here notches in my rifle after a while. Got me twenty notches so far. Damn fools just sit out in the open on their horses with their red coats. Like shooting turkeys in a field, Sir.”

“Where did you get your rifle?”

“Up in the back ass end of Maryland, begging your pardon sir, a blacksmith up that way makes 'em. Shoots about twice as far as them there muskets.”

“You know the frontier well, then?”

“Yes, sir. Been up to Canada, and down to Ken-tuk-ee.”

“Know the way of the Indians?”

“Yes, sir. Reckon I do. There's good 'uns and bad 'uns, just like us. They just want to hunt and be left alone.”

“Mr. Evart, I need to get a message to a man named- Boone, who is down on the Kentuck-e frontier. It is an important message, and can't fall into British hands. Mr. Boone will probably send a message back. Can you do this for me?”

“Reckon I can, sir. Gets me out of this god-forsaken camp for a while.”

“Do you need anyone to go with you?”

“Reckon I do best on my own, General.”

“This is the message,” he said, handing the man the leather wrapped parcel. “Guard it with your life. Burn it before letting it out of your hands. Deliver it to Mr. Daniel Boone. I can't tell you exactly where he is, but people down that way will have heard of him. Bring back his response as soon as you can. We will be here for a while, then, it depends what the British do.”

“I'll do it for you, General”

Washington handed him a paper.

“Mr. Evart, here is a requisition upon our Quartermaster. It will

allow you to draw powder and lead and whatever else you might need. Also, you will be provided with a good horse. When can you get started?"

"Right after I get me some vittles, General." Washington and Evart shook hands. Washington returned to his papers again. He couldn't help but wish he were going.

Cumberland Gap, Kentucky Wilderness, Western Frontier of British North America, February, 1778.

It was raining steadily in the forest, and Evart let the horse choose the way. His senses were attuned to the sounds, smells, and lighting. There were many ways to die here, and there were many enemies.

A townsman would have missed it. Evart's sixth sense, that had kept him alive this long, alerted him to the body. It was an Indian, lying near a tree, mostly hidden in the ferns. He scanned the surrounding forest, then dismounted. He drew his knife, and went to the body. The man had an arrow in his shoulder. Carefully, Evart examined the body, and found that he was still alive, but had lost a lot of blood.

Evart got his pack from the horse, and built a small fire using dry tinder he carried. He left the horse to forage - it would come when he needed it. Evart ate some of his dried provisions, and considered the Indian again. He had not moved since Evart discovered him.

Evart choose his path carefully as he always did. The Indian had no weapons. Evart gathered some moss and herbs, then returned to the Indian. He cut the arrow head off the shaft, and drew out the shaft. There was a moan from the Indian. Evart packed the wound with the moss and herbs, then wrapped himself up in his cloak and sat down against a tree.

Dawn was breaking when Evart's eyes opened. He was instantly awake, a skill developed over long years of being where men and animals tried to kill him. The Indian's eyes met his, but the man did not move. Evart rose slowly, and took a cup of water to the man. He helped him sit upright, and held the cup while he drank. Evart said, “It was not your time to die.”

“You speak the language of my people?”

“I do. How did you come to meet with an arrow of the Shawnee?”

“I was hunting near here. They ambushed me, but I escaped from them. They would have made great sport of me before I died. Their people and mine are enemies.”

“I know this.”

“Why did you help me?”

“You are an Iroquois, of the six Nations?”

“This is true.”

“We are not enemies.”

The men sat quietly for a while.

“Why is a white man on these lands?”

“I seek a man named Boone. I have a message for him from my Chief.”

“I know this white man Boone. He was captured by the Shawnees. They hold him captive, and want his woman and children.”

“Do the Shawnee fight for the British?”

“The Shawnee fight for the Shawnee. Chief Blackfish takes gifts from the British and the Americans. He is no friend to the white man on this land.”

“I need to find this man Boone”

“If he is with Blackfish, there is no hope.”

“My Chief gave me this task. I must carry it out.”

“I will shown you where Boone's women live. They may have word of him. I have spoken.”

“First, you need to get your strength back. Eat this.” Evart handed him a piece of dried deer meat.

“Show me the arrow that was in me.”

Boone gave him the feathered end.

“I know this man. Soon he will die.” Evart watched him eat, and did not doubt him.

“My name is Evart. What are you known as?”

“I am called Two Wolves Running, E-Vart.”

Evart rode his horse through the forest, and the Indian trotted along beside him. He showed no signs that his wound bothered him, and no signs of fatigue. Pausing only to hunt, they continued into the mountains, toward a gap that could be seen from a long ways off.

They approached a log fort in a clearing, surrounded by tilled fields. No one was visible, but smoke rose from the fort. They stopped outside of rifle range, and Evart dismounted, handed the reins to the Indian, and hung his rifle from the saddle. Then he began to walk toward the fort. A shot rang out, a bullet plowed into

the ground between his feet, and he stopped.

“What'da you want?” came a shout from the fort.

“I be looking for a man named Boone.”

“That's who has you in his sights, stranger. What's your business?”

“I have a letter for you from Colonel Washington”

The gate of the fort opened, and several men came out. One slung his rifle, and walked to where Evart was standing.”

“Dan'l Boone, at your service.”

“Evart's the name.” they shook hands.

“Who's the Savage?”

“I saved his life, and he brought me here. Reckon he thinks we are brothers.”

“I have no great love for Indians at the moment. I was a 'guest' of the Shawnee until I escaped. They killed many of my men. The burned my crops, and plan on coming back to burn this settlement. My wife and children went back to North Carolina.”

“Let's go inside the Fort, Evart, and you can give me the letter.” Evart motioned to the Indian to follow. He retrieved his rifle from the horse.

“Nice place you got here, Boone.”

“Welcome to Boonesboro, Mr. Evart.”

They sat down around the fire, and Evart was served some of the stew. Evart put down his bowl, and went to the pot and got another

bowl, that he handed to the Indian. A big mountain man stood up and said “We ain't sharing no food with them savages,” and lunged for the Indian.” Evart tripped him, and his knife was at the man's throat.

“This here's my friend. You ain't. If you got a problem with that, we can go outside the fort and settle this right now. Knives, rifles, tomahawk, bare hands - your choice.”

Boone intervened. “I got more cause to hate them then you do, Caleb. Right now, he is our guest.”

Evart released the man. He got up and walked away. “Just better stay out of my way,” he murmured.
The Indian squatted down by the wooden palisade. “We leave this place soon?” he asked.

Evart said, “We leave soon.”

Evart sat back down, and pulled the leather wrapped letter from his shirt.

“Don't pay Caleb no more mind, Evart. His family was killed by Indians a while back.”

Evart handed Boone the packet. “Not all Indians are enemies.”

“Out here, its hard to tell.”

Boone unwrapped the packet, and read the letter. He stood up.

“I need to do some thinking on this. Probably best to say in the fort. You can feed your horse over there.”

“Thank you kindly”

Darkness was beginning to fall when Boone returned with the

packet.

“I have written a reply to General Washington,” he said, and handed the letter to Evart. You'll be taking the reply back?'

“Reckon I will.”

“You are welcome to stay here as long as you wish.”

“I'll be going in the morning, thanks. Took me too long to get here, and will take me a while to get back.”

“Mr. Evart, we could always use a good man here.”

Evart stared into the fire. “Reckon I could be happy in this country. I promised General Washington to deliver that letter and bring back your reply. Must be important, or he would'na asked.”

“I understand. How goes the war? We don't get a lot of news here.”

“When I left, the General and his boys were hold up at a god-forsaken place called Valley Forge in Pennsylvania. The British were in houses in Philadelphia. We whupped them pretty good, and they were leaving us alone. Figure the fighting will get going again in the Spring.”

“I was born in Pennsylvania,” said Boone. “I went with Washington and Braddock to Fort Duquesne, when Braddock was killed. Washington got us out of there and back to the Fort at Will's Crick.”

“Did you read Washington's letter, Evart?'

“No sir. I reckon if he had a-wanted me to, he would have told me to.”

“Well, I will share this with you. I was part of a Pennsylvania

group of boys, driving the wagons for the British. They had a lot of wagons. I swear they brought half the British Army's supplys on that trip into the back woods.

“There was one special wagon with Braddock's papers and personal effects and the Army's payroll. In the confusion of the battle, we lost track of it. Later, I helped a fellow, named Harris I recollect. Fellow from the farm next to mine. He said he and his mate had buried the gold to hide it, but the other fellow got killed. Washington thinks the gold is still there, and asked me if I knew where.”

“Do you?

“If I knew where that gold was, I'd be living in London now, Mr. Evart.”

“I doubt that, Boone.”

They listened to the night sounds for a while.

“This is a good country, Evart. A man can make a new beginning here, carve out a piece of this land for himself.”

“Hope to get back this way some time...”

“Look me up if you do. We're preparing the fort to withstand another attack from Blackfish and his warriors. He won't run me off from here. The boys and I plan to visit him and give him a little surprise as well. Then, I'll fetch my wife and kids back.”

“Reckon I better turn in. I want to get an early start.”

The next morning, the fort was a beehive of activity before sun-up. Evart had accepted a second horse for his Indian friend, and asked Boone for a knife, which he gave to the Indian. Boone and Evart shook hands, and Evart and the Indian rode out of the fort and

headed east and north.

They set up camp for the night, and shared a small meal. When Evart awoke in the morning, the Indian and his horse were gone. Evart ate, made sure his waterskin was filled, and headed off north. Several days later, when Evart awoke, the Indian was on the other side of the campfire. His horse was tethered nearby. Dawn was just breaking.

“My brother sleeps late”

“It is a good place to sleep, here.”

“The Indian fetched a small deer, and began to build up the fire.” Evart said, “You have had good luck hunting?” He noticed the man's bow.

“I have had good luck hunting.”

When the deer meat was eaten, Evart's curiosity could no longer be contained.

“Where has my brother been these last few days? Did it take him this long to catch one deer?”

“I had to track down my enemy. I found him and his brothers deep in the woods.”

“Your enemy is dead?”

“He is dead, as are his brothers. He had no further need of his weapons. His wife and children will mourn him, but he will not return to his village.”

“After I return to my chief, I hope to return to my own woman,”

They grasped hands. The Indian mounted his horse and rode away.

Evart collected his belongings, and headed north and east

Monmouth, Colony of New Jersey, British Empire in North America June 29, 1778.

The results of yesterday's battle still littered the field. Even in the early hours of dawn, the temperature hadn't cooled much. As many men had fallen from heat stoke as from lead balls the previous day. Fresh water was a scarce commodity.

Evart approached the battlefield from the southwest. It was apparent what had happened. He stopped to talk with a small group of Continentals. “Ho, boys!”

“Ho, mister. Got any water?'

Evart handed over his canteen, which was rapidly drained by the men.

“General Washington here-abouts?”

“Sure thing. General lead us yesterday after Charlie Lee turned tail. We stood line against line with Clinton's lobsterbacks, and they're gone this morning.”

“I have a letter for the General.”

“Find him up that way” the soldier gestured with his head.

“Officer of the guard, rider approaching.” The Continentals of the General's guard came to attention.

“State your intentions, Sir”

Evart reined in his horse, and dismounted. “I have a letter here for General Washington. He's expecting it”

The officer looked back at Washington's tent. “He has some one in with him right now. Wait there.”

Evart squatted on the ground, and was surprised to see General Washington escort a young woman out of the tent.

Washington was saying “...and, again, Ma'am I am deeply in your debt, as is your country. Now go see to your husband. Thank you Mrs.....”

“Please call me Molly.”

The officer addressed Washington, “Sir, this man claims to have a correspondence for you.”

Evart stood. “Welcome back, Sir!,” Washington said. I was beginning to think I would not see you again. Successful mission?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Please come in” Washington entered the tent. He sat down at the field desk. Evart handed him the letter, and Washington unwrapped it and read the letter from Boone carefully. Then he looked up.

“Where are my manners? Some wine?”

“Haven't tasted any of that for quite a while, General.”

Washington poured a glass of wine for them both. “We had quite the battle yesterday. Sir Henry is on his way to New York. He was Howe's rear guard, and we gave him quite the thrashing. Von Steuben's training of the troops is beginning to bear fruit.”

“That woman I was speaking to? She took her husband's place at the guns yesterday when he passed out from the heat. Kept fetching pitchers of water to cool the men and the guns. I need

more soldiers like her, Evart."

"Yes, sir." Evart was not quite willing to accept the concept of women soldiers.

"Did Boone tell you what I asked him?"

"Yes, General. And I know his reply."

"That gold could help us out right now. There would be a certain poetic justice in using British gold to fund the Revolution, don't you think? Franklin likes to keep printing paper money with nothing to back it, claiming as it goes down in value, the government has less to repay. Of course, he is a printer. He likes paper money. Evart, the story of that gold can't get out. Too many men would try to get it. It has to remain our secret for now."

"Reckon I understand, Sir."

"Good. When the time is right, I will call on you again. Right now, I need to keep the British on the defensive. We may see assistance from the French, with Mr. Jefferson's help, and from the Dutch. We don't want to kid ourselves - they hate the British more than they like us. But if they can assist our cause, we will deal with them."

"That's all too much politickin for a backwoodsman like me, Sir."

Washington chuckled. "Get some food for you and your horse. Will you stay with the Army?"

"Reckon I would like to see this through, General."

"Good man."

Western part of the colony of Pennsylvania, Fort Pitt, May 1779

The Maryland and Virginia Rifle Regiment was re-assigned from Fort Frederick in Maryland to Ft. Pitt, in Pennsylvania. They were part of the Continental Army, Western district, under Col. Moses Rawlings.

1778-89, events overtake Washington.

After Yorktown, things get really busy, but the nation is very much in debt after the war. A source for funds needs to be found.

Washington is elected the first President of the new Nation. Hamilton is Secretary of the Treasury. He advocates a whiskey tax. Not every one thinks this is a good idea.

Residence of the American Minister to the Kingdom of France's, Champs-Elysees, Paris, France ,1789.

The liveried butler opened the door to the study after knocking. “A priest to see you, sir”

Thomas Jefferson was standing by the fireplace with a glass of wine. He answered in French, “Show him in, please” Jefferson had received a note some weeks back regarding this visit, and asked the man to come. He had no idea what this visit was about.

A middle aged gentlemen was led into the room, and bowed to Jefferson. “Your servant, Sir”

His hair was graying, but his eyes were alert.

“How may I be of assistance, Father?”

“We have not met, Mr. Minister, but I have something that might be of interest to your General Washington.”

Jefferson waved him to a chair by the fireplace, and poured him a glass of wine.

“May I comment on your excellent French, Mr. Minister?”

“I could not conduct my country's business here if I did not speak your esteemed language, Father”

“There are those in my country who do not support your experiment in Democracy, Mr. Minister.”

“We are grateful for France's assistance, even if it was offered more as a foil to the British. Some day we may be in a position to pay your country back for its help.”

“I hope to see the time very soon when we can live in peace, and man can forget war.”

“All intelligent men hope for that, Father. What can I do for you?”

The priest produced a small piece of paper from his coat, and handed it to Jefferson. It was a map, hand drawn, badly stained and weathered. Jefferson took it carefully, and walked over to the window to examine it. He spent some time with the map, then returned to his chair.

“So what is this about, Father? This could be a map of almost anywhere. What lies there, buried treasure?” Jefferson chuckled. The Priest's expression did not change.

“Let me tell you my story, Mr. Minister. I was born the second son of a Count. As such...”

The story was interrupted by a know on the door. The butler announced that the meal was ready.

Jefferson said to his guest, “I have taken the liberty of having a

small repast prepared for us. Would you accompany me to the dining room?"

"You are too kind"

Jefferson lead the way to the dining room, where the large table was set for two, and servants stood behind the chairs at at the sideboard. The gentlemen were seated, and the courses of the meal were served. They ate in silence, and the dishes were cleared. Jefferson dismissed the servants, and poured more wine for himself and his guest.

"Sir, you were telling me about your Father, the count..."

"Yes, Mr. Minister. I was the second son, so my brother Etienne was to inherit the estates upon my Father's death. My path was either the military or the clergy."

"You choose the clergy."

"Not at first, Sir. There was this girl...beautiful, talented...the very breath of life"

Jefferson smiled.

"We were in love. I sailed for New France, very reluctantly without her, hoping to make a new life in the New World and bring her to be my bride. We sailed up the River of St. Lawrence and landed at Quebec. I found small jobs, but nothing to make my fortune. God did not intend me to be a hunter or trapper. Here I met some of the original inhabitants of the land, the savages. They seems to be nice enough people. "

"When I heard that the Governor was looking for volunteers to fight the British invaders, I took the opportunity, and joined the militia. We traveled down the Great Lakes and the various rivers via Fort Presque Isle and Fort Le Bouef to the Forks of the Ohio,

Fort Du Quesne. It was named for Marquis Du Quesne, the governor-general of New France. You are familiar with it?"

"Yes. It was later taken by the British, and renamed Fort Pitt"

"That is correct, Sir. But before that, it was manned by French troops under Liénard de Beaujeu. He had about 250 men, and about three times that many allies of the savages. These were not like the ones in Quebec. These were men of war, with no sense of humanity."

"There is a difference between us and the savages, Father. I think they just want to be left alone to hunt and fish on their land, but we bring progress and disruption."

The meal and the wine was making Jefferson sleepy. "So, Father, I appreciate your story, but I have pressing matters..."

"I was there when Braddock met his defeat."

Jefferson leaned forward and became more attentive.

"de Beaujeu had reports of the British column even before it left the Fort at Wills Creek. We knew they vastly outnumbered us, and they were bringing their big siege guns. It seemed to him that we would have to abandon and burn the Fort. As the British drew nearer, the hopelessness of our position became more apparent. We would not surrender, but therer was not way we could stop the British on the field of battle. Our Savage brothers sensed our situation, and were ready to blend back into their forest."

"But, after a night of prayer and deliberation...and drinking, de Beaujeu decided to go out against Braddock. He asked for volunteers from us, saying that he would not order any man to go. He shamed the savages into going with him, saying he would fight, even if his savage brothers would not. I went with him. We did not wear our uniforms, not many of us had them at any rate. We

dressed like the savages. He had the spare muskets, powder and ball brought to the gate of the fort, and those who went could take what they willed."

"We observed the British crossing the river, the last obstacle before they would reach the fort. They moved in good military order. They had scouts in front, followed by, what do they called their shock troops?"

"Grenadiers" Volunteered Jefferson.

"Yes. Their Pioneers cut down trees and cleared a path for the guns and the wagons. Men on horses spread out to watch for us, but we were hidden in the woods. They advanced in marching formation with their Red coats and their drums"
"When a large part of the army had crossed the river, our forces came face to face, and a battle erupted. De Bequjeu was killed early They fought well. They deployed their...Grenadiers forward, as the Pioneers and scouts fell back. They were able to deploy some of their cannon, and that almost drove our savages away. We were on both of their flanks. I'm sure the noise reached the fort, where the rest of the men were preparing to escape by boat, and burn the fort, once they received word of de Beaujeu's death."

"It was total chaos, Sir. I have relived it in my mind, over and over. The British fought as if they faced a European Army on the field, and we fought, like the savages, from behind the trees. They were close to sweeping us aside, when the tide turned. It was not clear what happened. Many of their officers had been shot off their horses. Panic spread though their ranks, and they just broke and ran. They had us badly outnumbered and outgunned, but once they started to run, they couldn't be stopped. I caught a glance of your Washington trying to rally the men, but it did not good."

"May I have some water, please?" A line of sweat appeared on the priest's forehead.

Jefferson poured him some from a carafe on the sideboard.

“I killed men that day, Mr. Jefferson. I fired at the red uniforms, and saw them fall. But when the British broke and ran, the savages pursued them, and hell was unleashed. We had no control, it was a frenzy of killing. The savages removed the hair...”

“Scalped?”

“Yes. Even the still living. I ran with them until I was exhausted, caught up in the excitement. When I could run no more, I sat down at a large tree, and then sought some water. The battle fury had left me”

The priest's face was becoming flushed. “I found a man then. He was almost dead, with a savage's arrow in him. He was a man like me, not a British soldier. His face...”

Jefferson poured him some more wine.

After a while he continued. “That was when I renounced war. Man is too cruel to man. There is no point to it. I examined the man, and found that paper I gave to you in his pocket. He then died. I took it with me, and went back to the fort. I had determined to leave the next day. That night, the savages brought back prisoners, and burned them at the stake. We could not stop them. I took a canoe that night and headed down river. I finally arrived at New Orleans, and found a ship sailing for France. When I got back, I search for the girl I loved. She had died of Cholera while I was in New France. For a while, I lost myself in wine. One day, I went to an Abbey, and asked to be admitted. They didn't ask about my past, but took me in and educated me in the ways of God. I was fortunate to be named a Priest. For all these years I have told no one this story.”

There was a period of silence.

Jefferson said, “and the map?”

“Mr. Jefferson. There is one other thing” The priest took a long gulp of wine, and looked down at the table. “When I took the map, the man's eyes opened and he looked at me. He said, “Braddock's gold” before he died.”

Jefferson offered the priest the hospitality of his house for the night, but he refused, and took his leave. Jefferson went back to his study, and stared at the map for a long time. Then he put the map with his papers, locked his desk, and went upstairs. The next day, he carefully wrote down what the priest had told him and put it with the map and his private papers.

Western Pennsylvania, October 1794 Whiskey rebellion.

“I'll be damned before I pay that Federal tax on our homemade whiskey.”

“Take it easy, Seth. The Government has to pay off the war debt, and ...”

“Well, let them pay it off another way. What about using Braddock's gold?”

\”You know as well as I do that's a legend.”

“Well, they can just print more money, then..”

“Secretary of the Treasury thinks that's a bad idea, and the import duty's are as high as feasible.

“Those U. S. Marshalls got their come-uppance when they tried to serve those warrants. And that Tax Inspector Neville should have be tarred and feathered like that guy over in Washington County.”

“Violence is not going to get us through this.”

“We should declare ourselves independent of the “United” States, then”

“I don't think the Federal Government would let us do that. The last thing we need is a Civil war.”

In early August, The United States Supreme Court determined that Western Pennsylvania was in a state of rebellion. That opened the doors to Federal intervention.

“We got 500 men on our side. What is General Washington going to do?”

Washington called up 12,500 militia from Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. He then rode from Philadelphia, the Capitol, on to Fort Bedford, where he met with the leaders and planned the action.

“We will federalize the militias, Gentlemen, to eliminate a State-versus-State Conflict. The combined forces will be lead by Major General Daniel Morgan. I will accompany the troops to Pittsburgh,

“My main desire, Gentlemen, is to settle this affair without violence.”

“That might be hard, Sir, with those block-headed Pennsylvanians.”

Washington visited the remains of Fort Cumberland at the confluence of Wills Creek and the Potomac. It brought back too many bad memory's of the Fort Duquesne affair. Henry Lee, Governor of Virginia and Commander of the southern militia lead Maryland and Virginia Company's to Fort Cumberland.

The Federal force collapsed the Whiskey Rebellion by sheer

numbers. Several of the rebels were tried for treason. Most fled to the woods to the west. Some were pardoned by Washington. Ten men were tried for treason, but only 2 were convicted.

Braddock Road, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, late October, 1794

It was a fine fall day, chilly with a mist over the valleys. Washington rode ahead of his escort, picking out the sites of some 40 years in the past. He remembered this wilderness from his earliest forays for the governor of Virginia, both surveying and to meet with the French. Some of his happiest times were spent in these mountains, with their blue haze and their unbroken lines of trees. Some of the worst times as well, as he helped get the devastated h Army back to safety.

Now, he was not only the military leader, but also President of the country. The burdens lay heavy on his shoulders. He thought back to being a teenager on his first trip west.

Office of the Vice-President, Mr. Thomas Jefferson, 1797.

"A good day to you, Sir" Jefferson greeted Henry Knox, the Secretary of War as he entered the office.

"Good Morning, Mr. Vice-President. How stands the republic?"

"Well, Mr. Secretary. No need for war today." Both men laughed.

"You wanted to see me, sir?"

"Yes, Henry. I have need of a man for a special expedition, ideally, a military man who can operate independently and with discretion."

"What type of a mission, Sir?"

“Confidential. He would operate under my orders, and report only to me. Do you have some one in mind?”

“A Lieutenant Clark comes to mind, Sir. Comes from a long line of soldiers. His five older brothers fought in the Revolution. He was too young to serve. I believe he is at the family plantation in Louisville. He would be your man.”

“Would you be so kind as to send him a correspondence, and see if he would meet with me here?”

“My pleasure, Mr. Vice-President”

A month later, a knock sounded on the door, and an orderly entered the Vice-President's office.

“A gentleman to see you Sir. Claims you summoned him - a Mr. Clark.”

“Ah, yes. Show him in please.”

“Greetings, Lieutenant”

“Mr. Vice-President” They shake hands.

“Sir, I should tell you that I resigned my commission.”

“I see. What are you doing now?”

“I am working with my Father on the family farm.”

Jefferson motioned him to a seat. “Is that your ambition.”

“I am not sure, Sir. For now, its satisfying. My brothers excelled me in war. I came along too late to participate in the revolution. Why did you want to see me, Sir?”

Jefferson appreciated the young man's directness.

“Mr. Clark. I have need of a discrete and enterprising young man to take on an expedition and conduct some inquiries for me. It may be of great importance to the Republic“

“Where is this expedition to, Sir?”

“Western Pennsylvania”

“And the nature of the inquiries?”

“Will be revealed to you if you accept the commission.”

Both men were silent for a while. Clark said, “I would be honored, Sir”

“Excellent. You come highly recommended by Mr. Dearborn. This matter is of some discretion, and you will speak of it to no one. You report directly to me, is that understood?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Mr. Lewis, take a look at this map. I received this from a gentleman in France...”

Jefferson completed his story, and Lewis was overwhelmed. “You think this gold is still there, Sir?”

“We have no reason to believe it has been found. That much gold would make men take notice.”

“I am at your service, Sir.”

“Our country could use that gold to expand our territory's.”

“Is there anyone you would choose to assist you, another discrete man?”

Clark thought for a moment. “Yes, Mr. Vice-President. There is a gentleman I am acquainted with who served with the Virginia Militia in the Whiskey Rebellion. I think he can be of assistance.”

“Sounds like an ideal choice. What is this gentleman's name?”

“Lieutenant Lewis, Sir”

“Ah. Very well, then. It shall be the Clark and Lewis Expedition.”

“I will start planning for this today, Sir”

“Come back in a week with a list of the supplies you will require. I have access to certain...discretionary funds of my office, and I will issue you a voucher on the treasury.”

“Thank you, Sir.”

Clark turned to leave. “And, Mr. Clark?”

“Yes, sir?”

“If this goes well, I may have more work for you in the future.”

“Yes, sir.”

Braddock Road, Construction 1.5 miles west of Great Meadows, State of Pennsylvania, 1812.

The Federal government had authorized the construction of a National Road, their first act of internal improvements. Work started in 1811, at Cumberland, Maryland. It mostly followed Braddock's military road.

“Hey Frank, Come over here.”

“What you got, Jack? Oh!”

Both men leaned on their shovels, and stared down at the skeleton.

“I reckon we better get Louie over here. I'll go get him.”

He returned a few minutes later with the gang foremen.

“What excuse have you got to stop work this time. Oh, crap. That a dead guy.”

“Yes, sir. Based on those buttons, probably some one important.”

“Go get a tarp, and we'll get this fellow out of the way. Then we can try to figure out who it is.”

“Old fellow who lives in that cabin yonder told me a story about George Washington and some British General building a road from Fort Cumberland to Pittsburgh. Maybe this is him.”
“Could be. We'll let the smart guys figure it out. Get a wagon over here to hold the remains.”

Braddock Road, Construction 3 miles west of Great Meadows, State of Pennsylvania, 1812.

The foreman went over to where Frank and Louie were working.

“Take a break for a while guys. That there body you found a while back – they say it was British General Braddock. The smart guys traced the buttons, and noted he had been shot in the shoulder.

“Are they going to rebury him?”

“Yeah, they want to do it off to the side, with a monument for him. They're contacting the British Embassy in Washington, D. C. to

contact his old regiment for a proper military burial."

"Weren't we enemies?"

"Not at all. The Americans and the British were trying to push back the French."

"When's that going to happen."

"When the politicians get moving on it. In the meantime get back to work with that pick and shovel."

"Yes, Boss"

"And try not to dig up any more dead bodies."

Eckhart Mines, Western Maryland, June, 1853.

Jonathan Alexander was eating breakfast at the boarding house he was staying in during my duties at the Eckhart Mines, when my landlady left me with the brood of kids to answer a knock at the door. She made the most excellent porridge, enough to keep a man going all day. Her husband was a miner, and she took in boarders to add to the family income. Not that there were many visitors in Eckhart Mines, except on Company business. I was an assistant surveyor for the Cumberland Coal & Iron Company, which had recently bought the operation from the Maryland Mining Company. Everyone in town was associated in some way with the coal traffic, which men pulled from the bowels of the Earth around the clock, and was taken to Cumberland on the rail road that the previous company had built. From there, it was taken to Baltimore on the Baltimore & Ohio lrailine, an engineering marvel, or to Georgetown on the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. Eckhart Mines coal was feeding the industrial might of the eastern United States, and emigrants from the Old County's of Europe streamed in to provide the labor. My landlady and her husband had a bit or an Irish accent, but the kids were definitely American. The youngest was

almost 8, and looked forward to working at the mines as soon as he could.

The landlady brought me an envelope, addressed to me in a hand I recognized. “Post for you, Mr. Alexander,” she said. I brought the seal, and unfolded the letter. My immediate supervisor back in Baltimore requested my presence back at the main office post haste.

“Good news or bad, Sir?” My hostess inquired.

“Time will tell, Mrs. Brady. I must return to Baltimore immediately.”

I left to pack my papers and clothes, and returned to the kitchen to settle my accounts.“ I have enjoyed your hospitality, Mrs. Brady, and I appreciate your attention to making me feel welcome. Rest assured that I will stay with you again if the opportunity arises.”

“Thank you, Sir. Have a safe journey.”

“Ah, Mrs. Brady? What would be the quickest way to reach Cumberland? Can I rent a horse, or has the stage already gone through?”

“Why, Sir, you could take the rail road car to Cumberland.”

“A rail road car?”

“Yes sir. Quickest and most direct route. Down there where the load the coal cars sir. Can't miss it.”

“I've not noticed it before. Very well, and thank you again.”

“Enjoy your ride, Sir.”

I left my temporary home in the hills, and walked down to the trestle where the long string of coal hoppers awaited their journey to Cumberland. I didn't see anything that resembled a passenger train, but I did see a passenger car at the far end of the line of hoppers. I walked over to it, and hailed the conductor.

“Captain! I need to get to Cumberland, and meet up with the B&O train to Baltimore.”

“We leave in about 10 minutes, Sir. You will have almost an hour after we reach Cumberland to book a seat on the Baltimore & Ohio Train. Put your bags onboard, and have a seat.”

I boarded the car, which was nowhere near as fancy as the B&O coach that I had taken to Cumberland. The hard wooden benches were not inviting, but my journey would be short. I stowed my luggage under the seat. There were two others in the car, and we were joined by a third gentleman before the conductor got onboard.

“Fares, Gentlemen.” he said, collecting twenty cents from each of us. I got a receipt.

I was looking out the window for our locomotive, when the conductor yelled out the window, “Let her g, Jake.” The car slowly began to drift, and I thought we would presently meet up with our motive power, We drifted past a long line of hoppers, ad began to pick up speed. There was still no sign of an engine.

“Captain!” I shouted. I gripped the window frame tightly.

“Yes, sir?”

“Are we drifting out of control, where is our engine?”

“He smiled, and one of the other men chuckled.”

“First time on the gravity car, Sir? We can get to Cumberland downhill with no help. It's uphill that's tough.”

“We just roll down the mountain?”

“That's it. Jake works the brakes so we don't get going too fast. When we want to come back up, they hitch us to the end of a string of empty's. We arrange our schedule to meet the B&O several times a day.”

“Is this safe?”

“Ain't been killed yet. Been doing this since they opened the line.”

“Very interesting.”

“Just sit back and enjoy the scenery. There's a big horseshoe curve

ahead, and we will pass through two tunnels and over several bridges. We pass over Braddock's old road, and through the Narrows on the Mount Savage Railroad. You want to be on the right side then for the best view."

"Thank you, Captain. My friends in Baltimore will scarce believe this."

"Tell 'em to come ride with us, young fella."

Survey party campsite, Western Maryland, near the Pennsylvania border, 1854

The men settled in around the campfire after the evening meal. Game had been plentiful and their supplies were holding up well. In a week or so, they would reach Pittsburgh.

The surveying equipment was packaged securely in the wagons, and the chief surveyor was reviewing his notes before it got too dark.

"What do you think, Jeremiah? Is this really going to work?'

"The senior surveyor looked up. I sure would hate to be the engineer who has to dig this ditch. But, that's not what the canal company is paying me for. They want to know if there is a path, and what it will be involved."

"From what we have seen since leaving Cumberland, this is uphill all the way."

"Yes, but following Wills Creek gives us some advantage, and, from the Pittsburgh side, the rivers provide a source of water. The canal company wants to finish the dream of 50 years ago - to connect the Ohio River to the Atlantic."

"This sure does seem to be the hard way to do it."

“Well, a few years back, we looked at a more southern approach, meeting the Ohio above Parkersburg, Virginia. It was much longer. We found that we could follow the Potomac easily to Westernport, then the Savage River further west. There were many possible paths.”

“That's the route the railroad chose, right?”

“That's right. Between Benjamin Latrobe's engineering and Ross Winan's locomotives, they now have a path to Wheeling.”

“Problem with the southern route was, we would have to construct a big artificial lake in the western part of Maryland to keep the locks filled with water. That was going to cost more than the canal construction.”

“Does this connection to Pittsburgh make any sense?”

“Not for you or me to say. We've been hired to get the data for the Canal Company. They will make the decision. The merchants of Pittsburgh don't get along that well with the B&O railroad, so they may be willing to come up with the money.”

“When we get up closer to the Monongahela up at Pittsburgh, we will be following the Braddock Road.”

Stage Coach stop, National Road, Western Maryland, 1859.

The tall, lanky man unfolded himself from the stagecoach, and headed to the outhouse behind the tavern. A few minutes later, he entered the tavern, sat down at a table, and ordered a meal and a drink. Shortly, he was joined by a fellow traveler.

“Have room for one more here?”

“Please join me. This room has more space than that accursed coach”

“John's the name,” said the man. From Pennsylvania, bound for Baltimore.”

“Call me Abe. The good people of Illinois saw fit to elect me as their Senator, so I am bound for the City of Washington, if this stage line doesn't kill me.”

“Congratulations, Sir. A senator. I am impressed.”

“Well, my occupation is a lawyer for the railroads. I am not sure that government service is a fit occupation for an honest man.”

They both chuckled, as the food was served.

“Well, there is still a chance for the stage line to kill me, if this meal doesn't”

“How does one get to Washington?”

“Bad luck mostly.” Again, a smile came across the face of the other man.

“I have taken a stage from Springfield, and I travel to Cumberland, Maryland, where I will board the Baltimore & Ohio train for Baltimore. From there I change to the train to Washington.”

“We will be fellow travelers to Baltimore, then. I represent some commercial interests in Pittsburgh, and have meetings with merchants in Washington.”

The stage driver opened the tavern's door. “Five minutes, gentleman, or spend the night.”

The two men hastened to finish the meal and pay their bills, and

went outside to board the coach. Fresh horses had been harnessed to the stage. The man calling himself Abe folded his tall frame into the coach, and John took the opposite seat. With the sound of a trumpet, the stage jerked into motion, rolling and pitching on the rough road.

“In the railroad business, this would not be acceptable. I cannot wait until the country is criss-crossed by rail lines. The travel is smooth and on-time. It will be a boon to your merchants in Pittsburgh, Sir.”

“In Pittsburgh, we are more interested in river travel. The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, which runs from Georgetown near Washington is currently running to Cumberland, and is to be extended to Pittsburgh, or at least to the Ohio.”

“The rails may get there first. Cheaper to build.”

The stage lurched into a deep rut.

“Who is responsible for the maintenance of this road?”

“Well, President Jefferson had it built as one of those 'internal improvements' to tie the country together. He was smart, though, and gave the maintenance job to the States. They collect tolls for the upkeep.”

“They collect tolls and squirrel away the money, said Abe. Federal government and States can't agree on anything.”

“Will you change that when you are in the Senate, Sir?”

“I doubt it.”

“Will you stay in Washington?”

“I don't know if I will enjoy the political life. I am a simple country

lawyer. I have enjoyed my work with the railroads. I may go back to that after my term is up."

They rode in silence for a while.

"Nice country here," said Abe, "Not flat like back home. These mountains are magnificent."

"This is George Washington's old stomping grounds, back in the time of the Indian Wars. This used to be Canada, French territory. Then the British General Braddock lead his ill-fated expedition along this very road to capture Fort Duquesne."

"I didn't know that. Interesting. Seems like they haven't repaired it since."

The men shared another laugh.

"Yes, Braddock lost most of his troops to the French and the Indians. He was killed himself, and it was George Washington who got the survivors back."

"Washington was a great man in many ways."

The men were silent for a while, watching the scenery.

John finally said, "Legend has it that Braddock's gold is buried around here somewhere..."

"His gold?"

"The British army's payroll. It has never been found."

"Interesting."

Robert E. Lee's tent, encampment, Virginia, 1864.

“You sent for me, Sir?” The man entered the tent and saluted.

“Yes, please be seated, Colonel Henry.”

“I have a dangerous mission behind enemy lines that would be valuable to our side. I need a trustworthy man to carry it out.”

“In your service, Sir.”

“Colonel, as you may know, the Confederacy is short of money and supplies. The North's blockade minimizes the help we can get from Europe. Mr. Davis wonders how long we can continue this war.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“I have to give you some background. The Lee's have been in Virginia since it was a colony. We fought with the British in the French & Indian War, and against the British in the War for Independence.”

“You know the story of the Braddock expedition against the French up near Pittsburgh.”

“Yes, Sir. It did not turn out well for him”

“Indeed he did. He underestimated his enemy, and he forgot he was not fighting on a European battlefield. He had cannon, but only solid shot. Now we have canister and grapeshot. That would have cleared the woods.”

“Yes sir.”

“But here's the important part. He lost most of his supply's, wagons, canon, and a lot of his men. He also lost the payroll.”

“How much was that, Sir?”

“We don't know for sure, but it was enough for two British regiments for a year.”

“That's a lot.”

“Indeed.”

“So, what happened to the payroll?”

“No one knows. It's never been found. Now I had an ancestor in that fight, and in his personal papers, he described where what he thought was the gold was located. He went back after the war, but never found anything. There is a chance it is still there, and you could be the gentleman to find it.”

“At your service General.”

“Good. I am sending General McCauseland to Western Pennsylvania to stir up some trouble. You will accompany him, and brake off and head to Pittsburgh. If you find what we want, get a message to me, and I'll send men to help you get it back to us.”

“I will give you papers saying you are on a special mission for me. You are not to talk about this to anyone.”

“Understood, Sir.”

“In addition, you will be issued a horse and whatever supplies you think you'll need. When can you leave?”

“Today, Sir. No problem.”

“Excellent. Join with McCausland at Hagerstown. He is going to burn he town of Chambersburg in Pennsylvania, and Cumberland, in Maryland. He will let you break off from his Army before Chambersburg. You will be considered a member of his staff.”

“I'm on my way, Sir.”

“Best of luck to you. Your success could change the course of the War.”

Union Military Headquarters, Cumberland, Maryland, July 29, 1864.

The aide to General Benjamin F. Kelley handed the officer a telegram.

”It's definite, sir. McCausland is heading this way from Hancock. He did not burn that town, because there were too many like-minded rebels there. He is definitely headed for us, sir.”

“And we will be ready for him. He is not going to do to Cumberland what he did in Chambersburg.”

“Do we have enough troops to stop him, sir?”

“Our three regiments are 100 day troops. I don't know how they will do up against experienced forces.”

“Wire Washington to have what troops they can spare sent here on the train as soon as they can. Also check with New Creek and Grafton to see if anyone can reach us in time. Also, start to organize the militia – we will use any able-bodied man we can get. Issue rifles and ammunition to those who need it. We march at daybreak to the east. Send out cavalry patrols – we need to know where those devils are.”

The aide saluted and turned to go.

“Have the Artillery deploy to the east of town.”

Overwhelmed with tasks, the aide saluted again with a “Yes, sir.” He would not be getting any sleep that night.

Downtown Cumberland, Maryland July 30, 1864

“Look at this, Henry. That explains the church bells ringing and all. Its a fight.”

“I reckon we should go home and get our rifles and join up with our boys.”

“No time to waste”

His Mom saw Henry heading out the door. “Where you heading with your Dad's rifle, son?”

“The rebs are heading here from the East. They plan to burn the town. The Army has requested all able bodied men to back up the regulars.”

“Don't you go running off to war, child. Get back here. Now.”

Folke's Mill, East of Cumberland, Maryland, August 1, 1864, early afternoon.

The Federal Troops formed up on the high ground, facing east where they expected the Confederate troops to appear. They formed a line with the ease of long practice. The three companies of Cumberland Militia held positions on the right flank in ragged lines. Cavalry was sent out to find the oncoming Southern troops. The sergeant assigned to the militia troops tried unsuccessfully to get them lined up and facing the right direction.

“Ok, boys. The real Army will do most of the work, but we have to make sure them rebels don't get past our flanks.” He paused to spit a wad of tobacco in the dirt. “We will stop 'em here.”

“What did they do in Chambersburg, Sarge?” one of the civilians asked. He was somewhat overdressed for the fight in frock coat and tall hat.

“Damn rebels wanted money from the town, and when they didn't get it, they put everyone out, and burnt the town to the ground. Now if you boys don't want that to happen to your nice town, you will line up properly and do what I say.”

Cavalry appeared from the east and rode rapidly towards the line. “Steady, boys. They're ours” said the Sargeant.

The cavalry passed through the line, and drew up before the knot of officers. “They're right behind us, Sir, coming fast.”

“Alright, lieutenant, get some water for your horse, and stand by to go where I need you. Well done”

“Thank you, sir.”

The wall of butternut colored uniforms appeared out of the woods to the east of the Federal troops. The federals held the high ground, a rising slope from the valley. “Oh, my God, look at how many there are.”

“Steady boys,” said the sergeant. “Don't nobody shoot until I tell 'em to. Let's see what these rebel boys will do. They have artillery with them, I suspect they will use that on us first. Hold steady.”

The Confederate horse-drawn artillery wheeled around, and the horses were unhitched. The activity at the guns was done with a skill learned by long practice. It took less than two minutes before the first shot was fired at the Federal line. The Federal artillery was already set up, and the ranges had been marked. They replied in kind.

“Hey, Sergeant. That there's a Maryland flag down with them Reb guns.”

“There are Maryland units on both sides, son. That looks like that Reb artillery outfit from Baltimore.” At that, the rebel line seems to dissolve into smoke, and the awful crashing sound followed. The shells fell short, but many of the civilian militia fell to the ground in terror.

The blue suited troops laughed at their inexperienced cousins. “Get up, damn you. You ain't killed yet” shouted the sergeant. A semblance of ragged order was achieved. The Union cannon began to respond to the rebels. The rebel troops were drawn up near the

old mill, and it suffered a continual pounding from the Federal guns.

“How long we gonna stand here, Sergeant. When do we get to fighting?”

“Soon enough, boy. They want to see if they can make us run away.”

“Ride back to Cumberland, lieutenant, and send a telegraph to Washington. Tell them we stopped McCausland for now, but we don't know what he will try next”

“Yes, Sir”

The artillery duel continued, with little effect on either side. The militia were milling about, wondering when the real action was going to begin. Some drifted back to the tree line. The sergeants did their best to keep the men in line and focused. After several hours, it was a hopeless task. The sun was going down behind the Federal troops, and the ground between them and McCauslin's soldiers was obscured by smoke. Every one was tired and thirsty, but the officers were wary of the next move.

General Kelley addressed his aide: “Major, do I hear singing in the ranks?”

“Sir. The militia have begun to sing the Battle Hymn,”

“Have the troops join in, Major”

“Yes, Sir.”

The singing from the Federal line became more organized. Down at the Confederate line, the wind carried a hint of the melody.”

“What are them damn yankees up to now?”

“I do believe that's the Battle Hymn of the Republic, Major.”

“We'll answer them with a few rounds of Dixie, Sir!”

“If we can't outshoot 'em, we'll out sing them? No, Captain. Have our boys join in, same tune.”

“....yes, sir.”

Back at the Federal lines, the cannonade had stopped.

“Captain, see to the men. Make sure they have water and ammunition. We will camp here tonight. Have the cooks set up behind us. Make sure the wounded are collected and sent back to town.”

“Sir.”

“Feed and water the horses, but keep them saddled and harnessed. Have the wagons taking the wounded to town bring back food and ammunition. We'll bury the dead tomorrow.”

“Yes, Sir!” At the far flank, the militia stood milling around, not sure of what to do next.

“Henry! We did it. We killed the rebels. They're running away. We saved Cumberland.”

But Henry didn't answer, as the large red stain grew larger on the front of his shirt.

East of Folck's Mill, Allegany County, Maryland August 1, 1864, 10:00 PM.

“Major. Collect the troops. Set the cavalry out to screen us. Collect what wounded we can carry on the wagons. Leave the rest. We

head south. We will try to make for the river."

They will be coming at us from the east, if they telegraphed Washington. We don't want to be pinned here. I suspect revenge for what we did at Chambersburg is in their minds."

"We will leave our dead, but take only those wounded that can travel with us."

"See if we have enough horses for the cannon. Leave behind what we can't carry, and remember we have to travel light and fast."

"God help us all"

"Major Jackson, a word."

A man rode aside with General McCausland.

"Well, William, that didn't go well."

"No, Sir."

The men sat in silence. "Reckon you can get the boys back over the Potomac, sir?"

"We'll get across, William. Question is, how many of us."

"Yes Sir."

"Damn fool move there in Chambersburg, but after what them damnyankees did in the Valley..."

"What was that, Sir?"

"Burned the Citadel Military Academy. That was my school."

"Sorry to hear that, Sir."

“William, I need for you to continue the mission that General Lee gave us. It is vitally important - more important that us getting back.”

“I understand, Sir.”

“Head off now, and head west and north. Dump the uniform as soon as you can. Report back when you find out anything. Do you want any one to accompany you?”

“No, Sir. I can go faster and quieter by myself.”

“Godspeed, then. Best of luck, and I hope we meet again.”

“Godspeed, Sir. I'll do my best.”

McCausland watched him ride off, then turned back to his column.

Oldtown, Maryland, ford of the Potomac River near the C&O Canal August 2, 1864.

The Confederate Cavalry detachment pressed forward slowly. To get back to Virginia, they would have to cross the Canal and the Potomac then head east into Virginia. It all depended on what Federal troops they would face. They could turn back toward Hancock, Maryland and cross there, but they would be pursued by Federal Cavalry all the way, and they had wounded from the previous days battle. Hopefully, they would find a bridge or ford unguarded.

The scouts neared Oldtown. They crossed the canal and approached the river bridge. Union sentries stood at the bridge approach.

“There's smoke across there, Captain.” One of the riders in gray said.”And some sort of a fort.”

“That doesn't look like a campfire. Smith, Jackson – see what that is, don't get spotted.”

The troopers rode forward, out of sight in the woods. They came galloping back shortly. “Its a train, Cap'n” said the older man. “Troops around it. Big blockhouse over there.”

“How many troops?”

“Didn't see but a dozen. Might be more in the blockhouse”

“Any more on the train?”

“Ain't got but five cars, Cap'n and they look like freight wagons.”

“Allright. Jackson, go back and tell General McCausland what you saw. We will approach closer and watch the Yanks. We should be able to surprise them. A dozen isn't going to stop us from getting back to Dixie.”

The trooper rode back to the main column, as the other cavalry troopers spread out and advanced toward the bridge. They observed the engineer oiling the engine, and the Yankee soldiers fixing breakfast, with their rifles stacked.”

At the south end of the bridge, Colonel Israel Strough of the Ohio National Guard had received a message from Cumberland by courier riding down the canal towpath. He was advised to be on the lookout for McCausland, and to report back when he was spotted.

“Report back and do what, Major?”

“We should try to stop them from crossing, Sir”

“One regiment of 100-day troops is not enough to do that. McCausland has two regiments of experienced regulars, and

artillery. Even with his losses of yesterday, he could easily ride over us."

"If they show up in force, Major, we will enter the blockhouse, and hold out there until help comes from Cumberland."

"What about the train, Colonel? That should put the fear of god into the rebels"

"That train is a damned nuisance, and I suspect it will prove a good target, Major. Let the Home Brigade boys play with their toy. That contraption has no place in modern warfare."

" Keep two men mounted and on the towpath to report any sighting of the rebels back to Cumberland."

"Yes, sir"

"Where you suspect them fancy Ohio troops be going, Sarge?" Private Smith leaned against the iron side of the armored boxcar.

"They might be going to Richmond to arrest Jeff Davis and end the war, Smith. Cap'n will tell us when we need to know."

"Captain will tell you what, Sergeant?"

The Sargeant and private stood to attention, and saluted Captain Peter B. Petrie, Company K, 2nd Regiment, Potomac Home Brigade.

"Begging your pardon, Sir" said the Sargeant. "We was watching them Ohio boys skedaddle to the blockhouse"

"Their Colonel is manning the blockhouse. We have word that what's left of McCausland's rebels might be coming this way. We need to try and stop them."

“Yes, sir. My boys are ready.”

“Alright, Sargeant. Have the engineer maintain steam, and make sure our guns are manned. You might send a patrol up to Oldtown to give us some warning if the rebels show up.”

“Yes, sir”

“Fazenbaker, McDermott! Get your lazy asses up across the bridge and up to the town, and keep an eye out for rebs.”

“Sarge, we ain't had no breakfast”

“You ain't had my boot in your butt this morning either. Get going.”

“What do we do when we see the rebs, Sarge? Shoot 'em?”

“No, they'll just die laughing looking at you two. Get back here as soon as you can.”

The men set off to the small town. “Hey, Jake. Maybe that widow-woman would make us soldiers some breakfast, think?”

The Confederate cavalry scouts in the woods watched the two soldiers walk to the town.

It wasn't a half hour later that the soldiers came running back to the train. “Sergeant! Rebs coming! Bunches of 'em”

“Ok, boys. Get onboard. Let's see what this contraption will do. Man the guns, and stand by for orders.”

It was hot and dark in the armored car, and it smelled like men waiting for battle. Not much could be seen through the firing slits.

“Give them a round!” The Sergeant's command resulted in all three

cannons firing, which deafened all the troops in the car. The car filled with acrid smoke, causing the men to cough and gasp for breath.

The Confederate cavalry wheeled and raced back to General McCausland. “General, they got some sort of big guns up there on the train.”

McCausland pondered this. “Ask the Artillery Sergeant to report to me, Please.”

“Sergeant McElwee, Maryland Light Artillery, reporting, Sir.” The general returned the man's salute.

“Sergeant, we have a problem. Scouts report some sort of armored train in front of us, and a blockhouse across the river.”

“Yes, sir. Blockhouse should be no problem, sir. Log construction. Comes down like a house of cards when you hit it right. Armored train sir. Ain't never heard of such a thing.”

“Why don't you bring your battery up, Sergeant, and go have a look at that thing. See what you can do.”

“Yes, sir.”

The guns were brought into position between the town and the river, and the horses unhitched, as Sergeant McElwee went forward to look at the train.

“What you think, Sarge?” asked his corporal.

“Ain't never seen such. Looks like it was cobbled together from old box cars and iron rail. Well, trains can only go forward and backward, and they ain't going nowhere if I shoot the engine.”

Sargent McElwee sighted the cannon for the third time. He had

personally loaded the powder charge and the shot. Satisfied, he stepped back, and gave the order to fire. The concussion rocked the men, and the cannon jumped back. As the smoke cleared, they saw that his first shot had passed through the boiler of the locomotive, and steam was escaping faster than the engineer and fireman could run. A cheer went up from the rebel ranks.

“Fire number two” the Sargeant said. The second shot hit the next car back in the train, and destroyed an artillery piece.
“Hold your fire! There's a white flag coming from the train.”

“Sergeant, that was damn good shooting. Got yourself a train. Now take care of that blockhouse.”

Moments later, a white flag appeared on the blockhouse.

“I surrender to you, sir.” Colonel Strough held out his sword to McCausland.

“Keep your sword, sir. I accept your surrender. I am in a bit of a hurry, so I will accept your parole.”

The general said, “Did you dispatch a rider to Cumberland?”

“Yes, sir. He left about the time we first saw you.”

“Let me ask you, sir, as a man of honor. Can I leave my wounded in your care?”

“General, I will see they are treated as my own men would be. There are a military hospitals at Cumberland. We're all Americans, Sir”

The general extended his hand. “I bid you farewell then, Sir. You fought well. I hope God is with you through the end of the war.”

“Thank you, sir. The same wishes from me to you.”

General McCausland mounted his horse. “I am not the devil some make me out to be” he said, and rode south.

Camp Reynolds, near Braddock's Field, Western Pennsylvania, February, 1865.

The troops were boarding the train ready to get to Baltimore. There were some 2,500 troops, so multiple trips would be needed. The men were from the 57th Pennsylvania volunteers, the 85thPPennsylvania and the 111, 112, and 18th Pennsylvania Cavalry.

The rest of the men settled down in the camp, and rations were served. They cleaned their guns, and drew powder and ball.

They we sitting around the campfires, waiting for darkness to come. Some wrote letters or re-read the ones they had received.

“We're not the first Army to camp here here, you know?”

“Who was here before?” More than 100 years ago, a British Army under General Braddock, and George Washington with troops like us came up from Cumberland. There was no Pittsburgh, just a Fort called Duquesne. It was manned by French troops and Indians.”

“French?”

“Yeah. This was part of New France at the time. The Brits took it away from them, and we kicked the Brits out.”

“Wow.”

“There was a story that Braddock lost most of his supplies and wagons, including the Army payroll.”

“Never found?”

“Nope. Supposedly buried around here somewhere.”

“Hey, maybe after the war is over we can come back here and look around.”

“With a shovel, right?”

“Reckon so.”

“Ok, its a deal.”

Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Canal Basin, Cumberland, Maryland, 1865.

The man rode his horse down along the canal basin, where the boats were moored. It was after sundown, and the place was quiet and dark. Seeing a campfire on shore, he approached the boy there, who was roasting ears of corn.

“Greetings, young fellah. Do you know a Mister Carlyle?”

“Captain Carlyle. That's his boat, third over there.”

“Thanks.”

The man walked his horse over to the boat, and dismounted, tying his horse to a piling.

He found the walkway, and walked up on the deck of the canal boat, knocking at the cabin door, where light spilled out from curtained windows. The door opened, and a large man stuck his head out.

“What's your business?”

“Looking to go to Washington.”

“This ain't no damned passenger boat.”

“Mr. Lee said you might be of service...”

“Come on inside”

The door to the cozy cabin was closed, and Captain Carlyle motioned to the man to be seated at the table. A woman was cooking at the stove nearby.

“I am Mr. Jackson. I need a ride down to Washington town.”

“That can be arranged.”

“I am loyal to the Cause, Mr. Jackson, but I have a family and business to consider. I'll take you to Georgetown, but you're on your own then. If you get caught, I say you lied to me.”

“That's fair. I just need a ride.”

“We leave at dawn. We're already loaded.”

“What about my horse?'

“It would raise too many questions to take him along. I'll sell him in the morning, and you can buy a new one in Georgetown.”

“Put these clothes on - you'll need to look like a deck hand. There are sentrys all along the canal. We'll put your good clothes in the storage space under the deck. Put your pistol in there as well.”

“Have you eaten?”

At first light, the Captain sent one of his sons to sell the horse to the lock tender, while the other son fed and harnessed the mules. When they were ready to leave, they were third in line to use the lock.

Once they were moving down the waterway at a steady pace, Captain Carlyle came out and deck, and lighted his pipe. He sat down next to Jackson.

“How long will this take, Captain?”

“Should be about 5 days. We have 120 tons of Western Maryland coal onboard. We tie up at night, although some damn fools try to move at night to get more trips in. Dangerous, tho.”

“There are Yankee troops at each lock at the the aqueducts and bridges. They won't have any cause to be looking' for you, tho.”

“I am in your debt..”

“I have kinfolk on both sides of this here foolish war. Been good for business, but my Sister's son, served under Pickett, is under the ground up in Pennsylvania. Hope you got something to stop the fighting faster, Mr. Jackson.”

“I suspect I do, Captain. I have urgent news for...”

“Don't want to know. Once you leave my boat, you and your business will be forgot.”

Both men settled down to watch the scenery go by.

Five days later, Jackson awoke to the sound of rushing water. He went up on deck, where the Captain was preparing to transit another lock. “Mornin'”

“That there's the Falls of the Potomac. Main reason there's a canal in these parts. Rough water. George Washington first thought of a canal around here, and they actually built one over on the Virginia side.”

“We're getting close to Washington - be there before lunchtime if the traffic is not too bad.”

“I'll be making my good-bys then.”

“Good luck on your mission. Ask at the lockkeepers place for a horse for sale. His name's Caleb. Not one of us, though.”

“Thanks.”

Georgetown, District of Columbia, 1865

The man rode through the Town of Washington, which was definitely on a war footing. Troop encampments were everywhere, and massive amounts of supplies, horses, and artillery were piled up. He had seen the gunboats in the Potomac River. As the approached the bridge across the Anacostia River on the east side of town, he became more tense. Guards were posted at the bridge. This was the moment of truth. If they searched him...

“Morning, Mister. What's your business?”

“Morning. Heading over to Upper Marlboro to see about some horses.”

“Proceed, then. Be back before nightfall, 'cause we close the bridge.”

“Thanks.”

The sweat had soaked his shirt and jacket, but he forced himself to ride at a leisurely pace until he was around a bend. Then he hurried on.

At the town of Upper Marlboro, he sought out a certain address, and tied his horse to the fence post out front. Opening the gate, he walked across the lawn and up to the front door of a neat two story white house, with flower beds. He knocked on the door, and was greeted by a very pretty young lady in a yellow dress.

“Good Morning, Ma'am. My name is Jackson, and I have a letter to post.”

“Please come inside.” She closed the door behind him, and led him to the parlor to the right.

“Can I bring you some tea?” she asked.

“That would be mighty fine, Thank you, Ma'am.” He said.

“She left him there, and shortly, an older man entered, and closed the door behind him.

“I am Donally. My daughter told me you had some mail?”

“Yes, Sir. Mr. Lee said you could be of service.”

“That is correct.”

Jackson removed a sealed letter from his inside jacket pocket, and handed it to Donally.

“It is essential that this get to Richmond.”

“It will be there by tonight. Our mail service is much better that that of...Washington.”

The girl knocked on the door, and entered with the tea service.

“Thank you, honey, and would you ask Thomas to see me?”

“Certainly.”

The men were enjoying their tea, when there was a knock at the door, and a tall young Bllack man entered. Donally held out the envelope.

“Ah, Thomas. I have a dispatch to be handled in the usual manner. Take the chestnut. My regards to my sister.”

The man took the envelope and left, closing the door.

“You look surprised, Mr. Jackson.”

“Frankly, yes sir.”

“Thomas has no trouble traveling through the lines. He sometimes makes several trips a month, to my Sister's place outside Richmond. His wife is her maid.”

“He is reliable, then?”

“Thomas' family has served our family for a long time. Oh, I understand. Thomas is not a slave. He is a servant. He works for us, gets room and board and wages.”

“But he knows you serve the Government in Richmond?”

“Of course. Thomas is not political. The war makes no difference to him, one way or the other.”

Donally lit a cigar, and offered one to Jackson, who refused.

“Will you require passage back to Richmond yourself?”

“My mission here is finished, so I do need to get back and see where my services are needed.”

“I will arrange passage for you. In the mean time, you can stay with us.”

“I thank you, Sir.”

On the Lower Potomac, 1865

Thomas watched from the rail as the ferry boat headed downriver at a lazy pace. There was a mist on the river this early, and the sun appeared as an orange ball. A deckhand walked over next to Thomas and set his fishing pole down.

“Should be good fishin' this time of day.”

“With the right bait, yes.”

“You have anything important this trip?”

“I think so. A man came yesterday with this dispatch for Richmond. I didn't want to break the seal.”

“That's what they pay me for. I'll copy it and get the original back to you shortly, in the original condition.”

“I'll be fishin.”

After an hour, the man reappeared, and walked over to Thomas.

“Catching anything?”

“Nope? You?”

“I think so. War Department should be interested in this. I'll send it on as soon as we get back.”

“I'll be coming back within the week, with some more letters from my wife.”

“Be glad to get them. Take care.”

“Always do.”

The deckhand returned to the cabin.

Encampment of Coxey's Industrial Army of the Unemployed, Cumberland, Maryland April 1894

The Cumberland Canal Basin was full of canal boats waiting to be loaded at the railroad trestle, and other boats awaiting repair at

Merten's boatyards. Loads of lumber from Merten's lumber operations near Oldtown were stacked for drying. Mules were munching on grass in the corrals, glad to not be hauling 120 tons for a few days. The mosquitoes were incessant, and the stench of the basin took getting used to. Cumberland's mill race emptied near the basin, and the many outhouses overhanging the mill race added their own particular smells to the mix. Further down the basin, in "Egypt" as it was called, the boat-hands could find cheap whiskey, cheap women, or expensive games of chance. The canal was still recovering from the Flood of 1889 which had closed it for a while. The canal had gone into receivership and was now owned by its rival, the B&O Railroad.

Jim was a local Cumberland boy, turned out to see Coxey's Army. What he saw were vast numbers of men, resting and lounging about, before their final push to the Capitol City. He walked through the encampment, and stuck up a conversation with some of the 'soldiers'.

"Howdy, boys. Welcome to Cumberland."

"Howdy, mister. How far are we from Washington?"

"It's about 160 miles down the towpath. You boys walking?"

"Yes, we are. We're the Army of the Commonweal in Christ, and Jacob Coxey's our leader."

"Where you boys from?"

"The March started back in Massillon, Ohio, on March 25. We joined a week later, along the way."

"You walked all that way?"

"That's what these blisters on my feet say. There's almost 500 of us now"

“Why you doing this?”

“We're unemployed, boy. Been unemployed for some time. The owners say this is a “depression” whatever that is. I'm depressed I ain't got no job for two years. Don't know how much longer this can go on. We're going to Washington to ask the government to create jobs for us. There's lots the government needs doin' - we could build roads and do all sorts of public works.”

“Yeah. Ever since that there Panic of '93 all the bigwigs say they ain't got no money. Well, we ain't got no money neither. Gumment must have all the money. But it's in Washington. We'll go look see”

A new man appeared. “Come on, boys. Coxey's got us a ride on these canal boats to Washington. No need to walk”

“What are they going to do, arrest us for walking on the grass of the Capitol?”

“Probably.”

West of Great Meadows, Western Pennsylvania, along the Braddock Road, 1913.

At the Braddock grave memorial, there was a dedication. Capt. T. W. Constable was present.

The 44th Regiment, now the 1st Essex, was fighting in Afghanistan on a different frontier, against a different enemy

Camp near Swallow Falls, Garrett County, Maryland 1918.

The vacationing party was on its way from Oakland, Maryland to Elkins, West Virginia. That day they stopped and set up camp

early in the forest among the red oak, chestnut, hemlock, and sugar maple.

“The natural beauty of this area is incredible.”

“Come on, John. Help us get these tents set up. You can hug the trees later.”

“Henry, you probably want all this timber for the spokes of your wheels, so Harvey can sell you tires.”

“I've got the best end of the deal. For every car Henry sells, I sell five or six tires.”

“A lot more than that, given the number of blow-outs”

“Stick to your electricity, Thomas”

The men dismounted their horses, and set them to graze. Then they unloaded the packhorses. “This is a great country, fellows. When every family has one of Henry's run-abouts, more people can get out to see just what a wonderful country we live in.”

They then got the camp set up, and a fire going. Before they could decide on dinner, there was a shrill whistle in the woods, and the sound of a steam locomotive, apparently going fast. The men walked into the woods to investigate, since the sound appeared near. They broke into a cleared area with track, where a locomotive with a string of log cars was sitting.

“Preston Railroad number 8. What the hell kind of locomotive is that?”

“You got your Kodak with you, John?”

“It's back at the camp - I'll get it.”

“Hey, fellow! Engineer! What is this strange contraption?”

The engineer looked up at the strange group that had come out of the woods. He was oiling the running gear of the locomotive.

“This here is a Shay locomotive, built by Ephraim Shay his-self. Designed for logging in the woods - pulling heavy loads on poor track. All them wheels are driven. Henry, you should get one of those.”

The men noticed the long drive shaft along the locomotive's left side, extending along the tender. All of the axles were driven by spur gears.

Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and John Burroughs sat down around the campfire, and a bottle of bourbon was produced. It had made its rounds several times when Burroughs said, “Have you gentlemen heard of General Braddock's Expedition against the French at Fort Duquesne, and Braddock's Gold?”

Civilian Conservation Corps Camp near National Road, Braddock Memorial, 1939.

The men had settled into their tents for the night, after another 12-hour day. The evening meal was decent. Dawn would come early, and there was more hard work in store.

Jim didn't mind, he actually thought this was easier that working on his aunt's farm. He had spent most of his life outdoors anyway. After his parents had died and his aunt took him in, he thought he had found another home. But times turned bad, and Jim could see that it was a struggle for his aunt to feed him, even with the work he did on the farm. Jim had joined up with the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was organized a lot like the army, some men said. Jim did what he was told, and had 3 square meals a day, and some spending money at the end of the month. Most of this he

sent back to his Aunt.

Tom, on the other hand, was a city boy. He had no choice but to join the Civilian Conservation Corps. He was unused to living in a tent, and unused to hard manual labor. But the orphanage kicked him out, and he took what was available. Like every other night, his muscles ached, although less than they had at first. He always took some time to read before going to sleep.

“What are you reading about now, Tom?”

“Story about this country a long time ago. This used to be a British colony, you know, but the French claimed it too. There was a big battle near here, and the British were defeated. That memorial we saw commemorates the British General who got hisself killed.”

“You don't say.”

“Lost the Army payroll, too. Said to be buried around here somewhere.”

“I hope to read a book some day.”

“You will, Jim. You are doing very well with your bible. We'll do some more practice this Sunday.”

“You're a good friend, Tom.”

“Want to go look for that gold?”

“Not tonight.”

On the Western Maryland Railroad to Connellesville, PA, 1942

The troop train eased down the mountain, heading for Cumberland, and then Camp Meade.

“Where you from, fella?”

“Pittsburgh. You?”

“Chicago.”

“Heading to Camp Meade to learn soldiering.”

“Yep, me too.”

“This World War is really disturbing. The Germans and Italians in Europe, the Japanese in the Pacific and China. I wonder if we and our allies can stop this.”

“This is the greatest country in the world, once we get going. Hey, did you know there was a World War fought right here in Western Pennsylvania? Well, back in the 1700's a British Expedition attacked a French Fort up where Pittsburgh is ...”

C&O Canal Lock 70, Oldtown, Maryland, 1955.

The Sunday picnics had become a family tradition. Even in the winter they came here to ice skate on the frozen canal. The boy and his parents, his Aunt and Uncle, and their dog.

The boy finds lots of old nails for his collection, and a big chunk of iron in the cornfield. “What do you think this was, Dad?”

“Don't know. It's definitely a piece of something round. Iron. Heavy.”

“Could it be a cannonball?”

Cumberland, Maryland, October 1961.

Sunday dawned cool and crisp, and the surrounding mountains were ablaze with color. The boy awoke with excitement, as this was to be a day of great adventure. Although they usually went on a picnic at the canal in Oldtown every Sunday, this time was going to be different. They were going to drive to Fort Necessity in Pennsylvania.

The Church service dragged on for the boy more than usual. He and his father walked back afterwards, to breakfast fixed by his mother.

The boy collected his notes on the Braddock campaign, and his camera. He stuck several spare rolls of film in his jacket pocket. He went to help his mother pack the picnic basket and the cooler.

They left just after noon, heading west on Route 40, the Braddock Road. His father took the road up over Haystack mountain, rather than the route through the Narrows and LaVale. They headed into Frostburg, passing by his grandparents house in Eckhart. Once through Frostburg, they began the ascent of Big Savage Mountain, The big Oldsmobile 98 with its Rocket V-8 engine handled the climb effortlessly.

“How long before we get to the Fort?” the boy asked his dad.

“About an hour.” said his Dad.

The boy had seen Fort Ashby, another frontier stockade south of Cumberland. Fort Cumberland he had seen in books, but one had to image it on the site on Washington Street. This was going to be a real fort. George Washington had been here.

They got back into the car and headed west, soon passing over Lake Youghigheny. “There's a town down there, son, under the water. That's an artificial lake, built by the Corps of Engineers in the 1940's. When they dammed up the river to make the lake, the people had to move. When the water's low, in the early spring, you can sometimes see the foundations of the houses and the old road bridge.”

“Can we come back and see them some time?”

“We can do that.”

“Can we stop and take a picture of Braddock's Monument, Dad?”

“Sure, son.” the man pulled over to the shoulder of the road, and the boy got out with his camera. He took the picture, then paused to read the inscription.

We need to see Washington's Fort Necessity as well.

The man pulled the car into a parking lot on the side of the road, and turned around. “Time to be heading back, today though.”

“Can we go to Pittsburgh to see Fort Duquesne?” the boy asked.

“Not this time, son. It's too far. But we'll plan that some day.”

The sun was touching the western hills. Tomorrow was a school day. He would have to update his notes, and get his film ready to get processed before going to bed.

Pittsburgh, July 1962

The boy and his Dad has driven up to Pittsburgh, stopping along the way to see Fort Necessity. Today they were going to see Fort Duquesne, and a baseball game.
Von braum
What time is the game today, Dad?”

“Three O'clock, Son. They usually last 3 hours, so we'll grab some lunch here, and stay overnight at a hotel. We can do see Fort Duquesne in the morning, on our way back to Cumberland.”

They drove to the Stadium, and parked in the ample lot. They purchased their tickets, and the man bought his son a Pirates hat.

“Is this your favorite team, Dad?”

“Yes, I would have to say so. They won the World Series in 1960. I usually listen to the games on the radio, in my office. This is Forbes field, named after...”

“General Forbes, who finally took Fort Duqesne?”

“Right. And named it Fort Pitt. Who's your favorite player?”

“Has to be Roberto Clemente. Well, maybe between him and Bill Mazeroski.”

They found their seats, grabbing a hot dog along the way, and settled in for another good game by the Pirates. The stadium offered a good view of the area.

“What's that building over there, Pop? The one with the big smokestack? That's Hammerschlag Hall at Carnegie Tech. I went to school there for a while.”

“Wow. What did you study?”

“Electrical Engineering, thanks to a work-study program by Westinghouse. I never got to finish due to the Great Depression in 1929.”

“Excited to be seeing Fort Duquesne later, Son?”

“Yes, Dad. Finally. I had done some research at the library, and found our the French & Indian War, was actually just a piece of a global war. The whole thing lasted from 1756 to 1763. It was fought in Europe as well as North American, and South America, Africa, the Caribbean, and India. Our Revolutionary War was also a global conflict, against Britain, and with France as an ally”

“At the end, France was the largest loser, losing its territories east of the Mississippi, Canada, and Louisiana. It was a big deal. France had a million men mobilized. England won because of the

superiority of their Navy."

"You've been doing your research."

"Its fun, learning new things."

Western Pennsylvania, on the Border with Maryland, Fall, 2005.

The convoy of vehicles pulled off Route 40 onto the side of the road. The men piled out of the crew cab truck, and began to offload the Rivard Trenching Systems 1175 rock saw from the trailer. It was a cool crisp Fall day, and the bright colors across the mountains were partially obscured by the ground fog.

"This will take care of that hard spot," the crew chief said. He put the stopper back into his thermos of coffee.

The other truck, hauling the spools of bright orange fiber optic cable pulled up behind the dump truck and trailer.

"Internet to Pittsburgh." said one of the workers. They set up a line of cones beside the vehicles.

"It's a living. Laying cable, drilling wells, cutting timber, flipping burgers..."

"Get your butt in gear or you will be flipping burgers, Ralph."

The driver maneuvered the trencher off of the trailer, and over to the area they had marked with the orange paint. Several of the men began clearing around the area, clearing brush and dirt, so the big machine could have a clear cut. The operator engaged the big circular blade to check the hydraulics and cooling water flow, as the men backed off.

The operator maneuvered the big saw up next to the rock that had

stopped them the day before. He lined up on the paint marks, made sure his ear protection was in place, and engaged the saw drive. The sound was like thousands of screaming demons as the diamond coated blade bit into the rock.

He had made decent progress, when he idled the saw blade, and backed the machine away from the work site. Ralph got up from leaning against the “Men Working” sign, and began to clear rock debris and dirt from the worksite, as the operator got his coffee.

Ralph stopped digging, and called the crew chief over. “Hey boss, take a look at this.”

They got done on their knees to examine what had been uncovered.”

“That looks like...”

“Shit. Looks like human remains. Damn. That's going to hold us up.”

“Can we just dig 'em up and plant 'em again over there?”

“No, dummy We can't.” The crew chief went to call his dispatcher to call 911, and the crew decided an early lunch was a good idea. The operator powered down the saw. A half-hour later, a police cruiser rolled up, and the crew chief went over.

“We were digging for some cable, Officer, and think we have some human remains over there.” The officer got out of his cruiser, and went over to inspect the installation. He made some notes, and called back to his dispatcher.

“They're going to send the Assistant Medical Examiner out. No more digging for now, ok?”

“Right. I'll keep another guy here, but I'll send the big equipment

back to the shop."

"The officer went back to his cruiser's trunk, and got a roll of yellow "Crime Scene" tape, and began to mark out the area.

The crew chief walked over to the men at the truck. "Get her loaded up and head back to the shop boys. Nothing more here today - the police want to check this out. Smitty, you stay with me. Leave the trailer with the spools."

The crew chief got into the pickup truck and lit a cigarette. The bosses were not going to be happy.

Later, the Medical Examiner's assistant showed up in a Chevy Suburban, and parked behind the police cruiser. He and the police officer went over to the scene. He decided he would not need the gurney or body bag, so he went back and got his camera and a large plastic evidence bag. he checked the GPS location of the scene, and took a series of photographs. Then, he put on his gloves and began to remove the fragments of bone and place them in the bag. The skull was not in bad shape, but the ribs were scattered. He found the long bones of the legs and arms.

The Crew Chief came over to watch. "Looks like he's been there for quiet a while."

"Looks that way to me, but it's not my call. I just bag 'em and take 'em back to the shop."

"Need any help?"

"Yes, if you have a full-size shovel and maybe a rake?"

"Bring 'em right over."

The Suburban drove off with the gathered evidence. The Crew Chief walked over to the Patrol Car.

“Can I get my crew back out here tomorrow?”

“This is an active crime scene until the M.E. tells us it isn't. No digging. Call our office for an update.” He gave the crew chief his card.

The crew chief drove back to the shop. This day was not going well.

Millholland House, currently the Parsonage for the Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Washington Street, Cumberland, 2010.

The young man had parked up on Prospect Square, and walked down to the Millholland House, west of the Emmanuel Episcopal Church. The stately house served as the parsonage for the Church. He rang the doorbell, was invited in, and joined the parson in his office.

“I was fascinated when you called and asked to see the house. I didn't know its history.”

“Yes, its quite interesting. James Millholland's father worked for the C&P Railroad in Mount Savage, and son James worked his way up through the ranks to become a Master Mechanic and Vice-President. The new Georges Creek & Cumberland Railroad, a upstart competitor to the C&P, wanted him for their new line. This house was part of the deal.”

“Fascinating. I read the book you sent me. All new to be.”

“Glad you enjoyed it.”

“You know about Fort Cumberland, I presume,” said the Parson.

“Yes sir. Been interested in that and the Braddock expedition since

I was in grade school."

"I have something to show you that you might not know about. Let's go outside."

The went around the back of the building.

"This space was part of Fort Cumberland, of course."

The parson took him over to a circular concrete slab. "And that's the Fort's well."

"I hadn't heard of that. I knew they went down to Wills Creek and Potomac for water, but that's not much good when you're besieged."

"Exactly. They dug around a bit, and finally got to a good source of water."

"Interesting. I wounder what's down there?"

"No idea. I keep thinking about asking the Smithsonian or someone like that to check it out. No one seems to have any interest. Could be all sorts of stuff down there from before the Revolution."

"Well, hope you can something going on that. Keep in touch."

"Thanks for coming."

"Thank you for the tour and the information."

Penn State University, State College, PA. Department of History, 108 Weaver Building. December, 2019.

"Hey George, did you see that article by Ed Williams in the Journal of the Historical sSociety of Pennsylvania?"

“The one called 'Treasure Hunt in the Forest?”

“Yes, quite interesting and well researched.”

“Inconclusive, though. It's amazing to me that the British Army payroll in gold was lost near Pittsburgh, and it never turned up.”

“We don't even know how much was in there. He cites Veech as saying it was 25,000 British pounds in gold, and the General's private funds had some addition 1,000 pounds.”

“He goes on to say that the researcher Pargrellis used the Windsor Castle Archives to come up with the 2,500 figure.

“And we don't know how many wagons carried to payroll. In one of Orme's letters, he says a “money tumbril remained at Fort Cumberland.”

“And we do know the French got a hold of Braddock's papers with his secret instructions from the War Office, and his copy of the detailed drawings of Fort Duquesne that Stobo did.””There is that mention that in retreat, the money tumbrill and the military chest were left behind. What is a trumbril anyway.”

“Its a single axle wagon for light loads.”

“Oh, ok. You know, further on, Engineer Gordon explicitly says the General's private chest was lost with 1,000 pounds. That could have be rummaged by the Indians.”

“Right, What's really strange is that if the French, or anyone since had gotten the payroll in gold, it would have bee obvious. No French report of the gold has ever been uncovered.”

“True, too much 'found' money.”

“There is that strange anonymous letter to the Duke of Cumberland saying the General had 2,500 pounds, and those fell into enemy hands. No further mention of that. They had, what, a few hundred French and Indians? That's still a lot to share around.”

“The Furnis report supposedly establish that the army pay chest was sent back to Fort Cumberland.”

“Was it received there?”

“Don't know”

“George, I need a coffee before class. See you later.”

“Not if I find the gold.” Both men laughed.

Afterword

So, where is the gold? The British Army payroll for a year for two regiments? Did it make it back to Fort Cumberland? Is it at the last encampment, buried in the ground. Was it found and quietly spent?

Besides the payroll, Braddock had a collection of his personal papers and a small fortune of his own. That has never been found either.

The Indians aligned with the French are reported to have found a small amount of gold and silver coin. The mystery continues.

Cast of characters.

Most of the Characters are historically correct. Some background characters were made up. Here is a list.

Abe (Lincoln) – railroad lawyer, future president, (1809-1865)

Alexander, General – Revoluntary war officer under Washington.

Jonathan Alexander – assistant surveyor at Eckhart Mines for the Cumberland Coal & Iron Co. Made up character.

Anderson – officer under Washington in Revoluntary War.

Athanese - native American chief, aligned with the French.

Barrington, English Officer, made-up.

Beaujeu , Lienard de – French officer at Fort Duquesne.

Blackfish – Shawnee chief, made-up character.

Boone, Daniel – Frontiersman , Head of a Maryland Independent Company in Revolutionary War. (1734-1820)

Boone, Squire – Daniel's Father.

Boquet, Captain Henry, British officer commanding Fort Ligonier, at Bedford, Pa.

Bouquet, Henry – Lt. Colonel, British Army, lead expedition from Fort Ligonier to Fort Duquesne.

Boy – the author

Braddock – British General, Coldstream Guards, 1695-1755.

Brady, Mrs. - boarding house keeper in Eckhart.

Burroughs, John – Maryland Camper.

Burton – Lieutenant Colonel under Braddock

Cornwallis – British General in Revolutinary War,

Cresap, Michaek – Western Marylander, Captain of a Maryland militia company.

Caleb – Kentucky frontiersman, made-up character.

Caleb – lockkeeper on C&O Canal, Southern sympathizer, made-up character.

Calvert, Lord – head of the Maryland colony.

Carlyle, Captain of a Canal boat – made-up character.

Chapmin, Russel – commander of militia.

Clark, William - explorer

Constable, Captain T. W. - British Officer from Braddock's old unit.

de Contecour – French officer.

Coxey , Jacob

Crawford – officer in charge of Scouts under Washington, mad eup character.

Creasep. Thomas – frontiersman, pioneer.

Davis, Jefferson – President of the confederacy.

Dearborn – recommends Clark to Jefferson – made up character.

de Beaujeu – French Officer at Fort Duquesne

de Contrecoeur, Claude Pecaudy, French Officer

de Villiers, Coulon, French officer, brother of Jumonville

Dinwiddie, Robert – Lieutenant – Governor and Cammander-in-Chief of the Colony of Virginia.

Dixon, Jeremiah – surveyor.

Donally – Confederate mail service, Upper Marlboro, MD.

Dunbar, Thomas British Officer under Braddock. 48th Regiment of foot.

Duquesne, Marquis Ange de Menneville. Governor-General of New France.

Edison, Thomas – camper in Western Maryland.

Ensign, Douglas, British Army – made-up character..

Etienne – made yp character.

Evart – frontiersman, made-up character

Fairfax, Thomas, 6th Lord of Cameron., head of Virginia colony.

Fazenbaker – Union Army private, made-up character.

Firestone, Harvery – Maryland camper.

Forbes, General, British Army, built Fort Ligonier, at Bedford, Pa.

Ford, Henry – Western Maryland camper.

Frank – worker on the National Road, made up character.

Franklin, Ben – Scientist, publisher from Philadelphia.

Fraser, John – frontiersman.

Fraser – British Sargeant of Grenadiers – made up character

Gage – British lieutenant Colonel.

George – History Professor at Penn Stahe

George III – English King.

Gist, Christopher - frontiersman

Hackett , Frances– (senior) commanding officer, 44th Regiment of foot. kKlled at Fort Duquesne.

Halkett, Frances – British officer, son of Halkett senior. Lead 2nd expedition against Fort Duquesne.

Hamilton, Alexander – on Washington's staff during the revolution. Secretary of the Treasury.

Harris – soldier under Washington in French & Indian and Revolutionary War. Made up character.

Harry (Brooks), bellhop at the hotel.

Harry – wagoner in the evolution, made-up character

Hawkins, Widow – made up character.

Henry – aide to vice-President Thomas Jefferson – made-up character; also a boy from Cumberland. Col. Henry, Confederate States of AmeriCA, SPECIAL OPERATOR FOR rOBERT e. lEE.

Henry Sir – British officer in the Revolution.

Howe, Richard, 1st. Earl Howe, British Naval officer in the

Revolution.

Howe, William. 5th Viscount Howe, Major General – British Army commander in the Revolutionary War.

Innes, Col – head of North Carolina militia.

Isaiah – Pennsylvanian, made up character.

Jack – worker on the National Road. Made-up character.

Jackson, Major William – Confederate Major, made-up character.

Jackson – Confederate scout, made-up character.

Jackson, Confederate courier – made-up character.

Jacob – early pioneer in the Pennsylvania wilderness; also, a made-up character on the Mason-Dixon expedition.

Jefferson, Thomas – Ambassidor to France in the Washingto administration. Later, President.

Jeremiah – Pennsylvania farmer made up character.

Jim – Cumberland boy, made-up character. Also CCC camp worker also National road, made-up character.

John – stage coach passenger, made-up character.

Jumonville, Captain – French Officer.

Kelley, General Benjamin F. Union officer.

Latrobe, Benjamin – B&O Engineering specialist.

Lee, Charles – officer in Continental army.

Lee, Harry – Governor of Virginia, head of the southern militias.

Lee, Robert E. - Confederate general.

Lewis, Meriwether - explorer.

Louie – Foreman of a work gang on National Road – made up character.

Lowdermilk, William Harrison – Historu author.

Man – author's father.

McDermott – Union private, made-up character.

Molly - Pitcher.

Ord, Thomas, Colonel, British army under Braddock, and Howe.

Robert Orne – Aide-de-camp to Braddock.

Paul – commander of militia, made up character.

Penn, William – Governor of the colony of Pennsylvania.

Le Borge – French officer, made-up character.

Marie – Acadian French spy, made up character.

Mason, Charles – surveyor.

McCausland, John – Confederate General.

McElwee, Sargeant, (Union) Maryland Light Artillery.

Millholland, James – railroad man. President of the Georges Creek

& Cumberland.

Morris – British Captain, made up character.

Nemacolin – Delaware Native American.

Orme, robert – British officer, wounded at Fort Duquesne.

Pargellis – historian and author,

Penn – founder of the Pennsylvania Colony

Pierre – French spy, made-up character.

Pitcher, Molly – wife of American gunner. Took his position when he was wounded the Battle of Monmouth

Nontiac - native American chief, aligned with the French.

Pucksinwah – native American chief, aligned with the French.

Ralph – fiver optic cable layer, made-up character.

Rawlings, Moses – leader of the Western District of the Continental Army.

Ridgeley – Lieutenant of Militia, Revolution. Made-up character.

Rutherford – commander of New York Militia company.

Saint Clairwe – British officer under Braddock.

Seth – militiaman at Fort Cmuberland, also a moonshiner in Western Pennsylvania, made-up character.

Horatio Sharpe – 22nd propriatary Governor of Maryland.

Smith – Confederate scout, made-up character.

Smitty, George – moonshine brewer, made-up character.; also militiaman who buried Braddocks gold,

Smythe, Jacob, Private - made up character of 44th Regiment (British).

Squire George Boone)– Daniel's father.

Squire James – Pennsylvania, made-up charaqcter

Strobo, Robert – Captain of Virginia Regiment.

Strough, Colonel Israel – Ohio National Guard in the Civil War.

Tanacharison – Iroquois Native American, the Half King.

Thomas – Courier between Maryland and virginia.

CCC camp worker also National road, made-up character.

Tommy – British able seaman.

Trent, - Militia Captain, Virginia, made-up character.

Two wolves running – Native American.

Veech, James – Historian and author.

Von Braam, Jacob - translator

Washington, George – commander of Militia, future president.

Washington, Lawrence – George's older brother.

White Eyes - native American chief, aligned with the French.

William – Confederate officer, made-up character.

Williams, Ed – Historian and author.

Williamson – American officer under Washington, fighting in New York City.

Winans, Ross – mechanical genius from Baltimore.

If you enjoyed this book, you might also be interested in some of these from the author.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Cumberland & Pennsylvania Railroad Revisited*, 2011, PRRB Publishing, ISBN-0-9725966-0-7.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Eckhart Mines, The National Road, and the Eckhart Railroad,* 2011, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. *The History of the Industrial Revolution in Western Maryland*, 2011, PRRB Publishing. B

Stakem, Patrick H. *Down the 'crick: the Georges Creek Valley of Western Maryland*, 2014, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. Lonaconing Residency, Iron Technology & the Railroad, 2011, PRRB Publishing, ASIN B004L62DNQ.

Stakem, Patrick H. *T. H. Paul & J. A. Millhollland: Master Locomotive Builders of Western Maryland,* 2011, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Tracks along the Ditch, Relationships between the C&O Canal and the Railroads*, 2012, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. *From the Iron Horse's Mouth: an Updated Roster from Ross Winans' Memorandum of Engines*, 2011, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Iron Manufacturing in 19th Century Western Maryland*, 2015, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Railroading around Cumberland*, 2012, Arcadia Press, ISBN- 0738553654.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Mount Savage, Iron Empire, PRRB Publishing.*

Stakem, Patrick H. *Cumberland (Then and Now)*, 2012, Arcadia Press, ISBN-0738586986 .

Stakem, Patrick H. *Fort Cumberland, Global War in the Appalachians: a Resource Guide*, 2012, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Ross Winans, an Ingenious Mechanic of Baltimore,* 2017, PRRB Publishing.

Stakem, Patrick H. *Studebaker's wagons,* 2018, PRRB Publishing.